

LEADER'S GUIDE



SAMPLE



HELPLINE & ONLINE ACCESS

GriefShare exists as a ministry to help you as you help others. Feel free to contact us with questions, problems, and success stories.

HOW TO CONTACT US

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LEADERZONE

The online LeaderZone is a resource hub for “leaders only.” Download GriefShare logos and advertising art. Need another set of Session Agendas & Discussion Questions? Find them at the LeaderZone. Order additional GriefShare Leader’s Guides, workbooks, and publicity materials. All reproducible pages referenced in this book are available for download and reprint on the LeaderZone, www.griefshare.org/leaderzone (see a complete list on page 121).

LEADERS’ FORUM

Communicate easily and regularly with other GriefShare leaders and our GriefShare consultants through this moderated online Forum. You can ask questions, share ideas, make prayer requests, and react to messages posted by other Forum members via web or email. This is a free service for participating GriefShare churches. To begin participating in the Leaders’ Forum, go to www.griefshare.org/leaderzone.

“FIND A GROUP” ONLINE SEARCH ENGINE

This powerful publicity tool helps people find your group. It is located on the main GriefShare website for the public to view. You can input current information about your group at the LeaderZone, www.griefshare.org/leaderzone.

Forum

Invite all of your GriefShare leaders to sign up for the Forum. They will be greatly encouraged and learn valuable information to assist them in being effective leaders.

GETTING STARTED

CHECK YOUR GRIEF SHARE MATERIALS

Please check the contents of your GriefShare materials shipment. We've packed it with care, but we want to make sure you have everything you'll need for your ministry:

- **FIVE DVDS (WITH CASE)**

Discs 1-4 containing 13 GriefShare video programs

Disc 5: Leader Training Video and promotional videos

- **LEADER'S GUIDE:** Instructional and promotional leader training materials, plus Session Agendas & Discussion Questions for each session (each primary leader will need a Leader's Guide; make sure you also have a copy to share so that all leaders have the opportunity to read it).

- **PARTICIPANT WORKBOOKS:** Each leader and participant will need a copy (workbooks are not optional: they are key to the healing process). Please note that workbook pages are protected under U.S. copyright law and may not be photocopied.

- **PUBLICITY BROCHURES AND POSTERS** for mailing, distributing, bulletin inserts, and bulletin boards.

- **STURDY, POLY CARRYING CASE** for easy storage and transport of GriefShare materials.

If you are missing any of these items, please contact us, and we'll quickly send you the needed materials.

Additional Leader's Guides, workbooks, and publicity materials can be purchased by phone (800-395-5755) or at www.griefshare.org/leaderzone.

30-DAY SATISFACTION GUARANTEE

The GriefShare kits are sold with a 30-day guarantee. If you are not



Important

It is **ESSENTIAL** that you view your DVDs within 30 days of receipt to confirm quality. We will be happy to replace any defective DVDs within 30 days after you have received your GriefShare kit. Replacement cannot be made beyond this 30-day period.

ABOUT GRIEFSHARE

GriefShare is a network of thousands of grief recovery support groups meeting worldwide. Our purpose is to equip you and your church with a complete set of resources that help you offer ongoing, weekly GriefShare support groups. This life-changing material will minister to grieving people in your church and throughout your community.

WHY CHURCHES NEED A GRIEF SUPPORT MINISTRY

Most churches do a wonderful job of caring for grieving people from their congregation in the immediate days surrounding a death and funeral. Meals are provided, a service is conducted, and cards or flowers are sent. Typically, a pastor/church leader is directly involved with those who have lost a loved one before and immediately after the funeral.

But the griever needs more.

A few days after the funeral, most of the people surrounding the griever return to their daily routines. They don't understand the deep, prolonged impact caused by the death of a spouse, child, family member, or close friend. The griever needs ongoing support and encouragement, lasting months, or perhaps even longer. It's a level of care that even the most conscientious pastor is unable to provide.

That's the reason for GriefShare. We provide your church with the tools and structure to offer weekly, lay-led support groups. These groups are designed to meet year-round, providing the sustained support a grieving person needs. Because GriefShare groups are led by caring lay people from the church congregation, this ongoing support can be offered without adding a major workload for pastors and church staff.

GRIEFSHARE REACHES OUTSIDE YOUR CONGREGATION

The GriefShare program provides both inreach and outreach for your



www.griefshare.org

- Find GriefShare groups worldwide
- Sign up for the daily emails
- Read “God, What Is Going On?”

GRIEFSHARE DISTINCTIVES

Through our research and our experience in equipping thousands of churches worldwide for grief support group ministries, we have developed GriefShare around a set of key distinctives. We have seen this ministry model help many people find Christ-centered healing.

THREE-COMPONENT DESIGN

GriefShare is built around three components: video seminar, small group discussion, and workbook.

- **THE VIDEO SEMINAR PORTION** offers expert teaching on topics important to people in grief.
- **THE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** segment allows participants to discuss how the video concepts relate to their own experiences.
- **THE WORKBOOK** provides a video note-taking tool and a daily Bible study for personal study, journaling, and application of concepts presented on the videos.

All three components are intertwined and essential for promoting effective results in your group. For instance, a seminar-only format is impersonal and does not offer the opportunity for personal sharing and group interaction. A support-group-only format does not provide teaching and information that can be crucial to a person in grief. A personal study is necessary to allow time to reflect on and apply the scriptural truths participants are learning to their lives. All three components are essential.



ONGOING, CONSISTENT MINISTRY

GriefShare consists of 13 weekly sessions, designed to be repeated in regular cycles throughout the year. Participants are encouraged to attend more than one 13-week cycle. We've learned that when group members repeat the GriefShare cycle, they retain new information because they are at a different level of healing in their grief journey. In addition, participants will benefit from sustained interaction with their group over multiple 13-week sessions. This group will become much like a family for many group members.

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CURRICULUM STRATEGY

Your journey from mourning to joy.

Since the first edition of GriefShare, we've used this phrase to describe how GriefShare helps grieving people. GriefShare's content and its three-component design (video seminar, small group discussion, and workbook) work together to help participants along that journey.

GRIEFSHARE'S CONTENT – COMFORT, ANSWERS, AND HOPE

GriefShare is a 13-session program. At each meeting, participants learn about grief-related issues. The topics covered during those 13 sessions can be grouped into the following thematic categories:

- **COMFORT** (Sessions 1-5)
- **ANSWERS** (Sessions 6-9)
- **HOPE** (Sessions 10-13)

While it's ideal for group members to attend all 13 sessions, each weekly session is designed to be "open," meaning a person can begin attending at any time. Members will find comfort, answers, and hope in every session!

COMFORT: Sessions 1-5

Many grieving people feel like they are going crazy. They are unprepared for the intensity of their emotions and the duration of their grief. The first five sessions of GriefShare comfort participants by helping them realize that their experiences of grief are normal. These sessions also describe what participants should expect to experience (emotionally, relationally, physically, and spiritually) as they move along the journey of grief. This information stabilizes them, helps them realize they're okay, and prepares them for what lies ahead.

ANSWERS: Sessions 6-9

The members of your group will have a lot of questions. Many will be facing unique and challenging circumstances. It's important they receive answers to their questions and solutions to their problems; otherwise, they won't heal from their grief. That's why Sessions 6-9 focus on giving your group answers. Participants hear answers to the

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FINDING & RECRUITING YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

You can't lead GriefShare alone. You will burn out!

One of the most important things you can do to ensure the success of your GriefShare group is to find, recruit, and train the right leadership. Warm, caring, mature group leaders (whom we also call "group facilitators") set the tone for the group discussion time that follows the video seminars. Having the right group facilitators will help participants feel welcome, comfortable, and free to share their feelings and thoughts.

If your church is just beginning a grief recovery ministry, you might be serving as administrator, group facilitator, refreshments coordinator, and director of publicity! If that's the case, you are going to need help, and this section will get you started toward building a leadership team. As your group begins to grow, ask the Lord to help you identify people who can assist you in leadership.

To prevent burnout, never do ministry alone! If possible, always have someone serving with you. Remember the model that Jesus provided us in Luke 10:1-3 when He sent disciples out "two by two." Ideally, you'll have a team of four (two men, two women). At a minimum you should have two people on your team (we suggest two facilitators for every 6-8 participants, keeping the group small enough to foster relationships and to allow adequate sharing time). Whatever you do, don't try and start this ministry alone.

If you are a pastor or lay leader overseeing this ministry, you will also find help here as you build your grief recovery ministry team for your church.

WHAT KIND OF GROUP LEADERS DO YOU NEED?

The people leading the group serve as facilitators, guiding and shepherding the group. These facilitators do not need to be teachers or counselors (in fact, assuming these roles in a group setting is counterproductive). Their primary role is to create an atmosphere of warmth, caring, and trust in the discussion group. They must also encourage discussion about what was seen on the video and a time of personal sharing about what is going on in the lives of each group participant.

You can begin your GriefShare group by recruiting a leadership team, starting with two people to lead the group. One person can lead a group, but a team is preferable. You won't be able to survive as a leader

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IS THIS NORMAL?

SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION

As you make plans to start your 13-week cycle, consider having an Orientation/Registration Session prior to Session 1. See page 83 for more information.

OVERVIEW

Participants will discover:

- Why their grief experience is harder than they imagined
- Why the intensity and duration of their emotions are normal and appropriate
- Despite how they feel right now, there is reason for hope

WHAT TO EXPECT

It's likely your group will include a mixture of people with different kinds of losses: those who've lost a spouse, a child, a loved one to suicide, etc. All participants should be welcomed, no matter what their relationship was to their loved one who died. Make sure you stress to group members that despite differences in losses, the information presented will be relevant to the issues they face.

Many participants might be nervous about coming to the group this first time, especially about what might take place during the discussion time after the video. Acknowledge to your group that you understand this, and encourage them to stick with the group. Many will feel much better by the end of the first session; others will take two to three sessions to become comfortable with the group process. Encourage each participant to

commit to attending at least three sessions (most will become fully committed to the group in that time frame).

30-60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS

Leadership team arrives 30-60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer. Leaders should be ready to circulate and show warmth, care, and compassion toward group members as they arrive.

REGISTRATION

First-time participants:

- Have them complete a Registration Form and Participant Information Form and pay registration fee (if applicable).
- Give them a personal copy of the workbook, a pen, and any handouts.
- Make a name tag, writing their first name only.

AFTER REGISTERING

- Offer snack/drink if available.
- Introduce them to the other leaders and participants.

Allow 10-15 minutes for fellowship PRIOR to session start time.

OPENING THE SESSION

Start the session promptly at the published time.

WELCOME THE PARTICIPANTS

- Introduce your leadership team.
- Share announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.
- Session agenda (what to expect, schedule).
- Briefly share your experience with grief.
- Briefly describe the GriefShare program.
 - Video seminar
 - Support group
 - Workbook
- Give a quick overview of workbook sections and how they're structured. Be sure to explain how to use the perforated Care Cards in the