What happens during a weekly GriefShare session? How do you allocate the time? How do you get your group talking? On the following pages, you’ll find Session Agendas & Discussion Questions for each of the 13 sessions. They will guide you on how to lead your weekly GriefShare meetings.

HOW TO USE THE AGENDAS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

We’ve prepared a Session Agenda and a set of Discussion Questions for each of the 13 weekly GriefShare meetings, plus a recommended format for an Orientation/Registration Session and a closing Celebration Session.

It is essential that you prepare before each weekly group meeting. Review the agenda so you know what to expect. Read the discussion questions a few days before your meeting so you can be processing the questions and are ready to lead a lively discussion.

The Session Agendas are organized to guide you through the key elements of a weekly session:

OVERVIEW/WHAT TO EXPECT
A summary of the session’s goals and a snapshot of what to expect from your group members as they react to that session’s topic.

OPENING THE SESSION
This section describes how to get your meeting underway. How you open your session will vary, depending on how long your group has been meeting and if you have any newcomers. This portion of the agenda includes a guide and discussion questions to help you review the From Mourning to Joy exercises from the GriefShare workbook (and what to do if group members have not completed the exercises).

Need Copies?

You are free to copy the Session Agendas & Discussion Questions (the following pages) for use by your facilitators as they lead a GriefShare group. Or download and print them at the LeaderZone Library.
VIEW VIDEO

DISCUSS VIDEO
You’ll find tips on leading the weekly discussion, icebreaker questions, and object lessons to help kick-start your discussion time. You’ll also find a set of discussion questions carefully designed to stimulate conversation about the key themes from the weekly video.

NOTE: Reserve time for each group member to share challenges/successes faced in the previous week, but be sure not to let such sharing dominate the discussion at the expense of the discussion questions material. Strive for a balance.

WRAP-UP
How to end each weekly meeting on a hopeful, encouraging note.
ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION AGENDA

Holding a GriefShare Orientation/Registration Session prior to starting the actual 13-week cycle of video content is an excellent strategy that will help orient new group members and calm what would otherwise be first-session nervousness and discomfort.

ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION COMPONENTS

1. As participants arrive, have them sign in and fill out Registration Forms as needed. Have leaders available for help. Collect the registration fee and distribute a workbook to each person.

2. Allow 5–10 minutes of refreshment/fellowship time before you start the meeting.

3. Welcome everyone, and introduce your leadership team and group facilitators. Have one or two leaders or alumni give a short two-minute summary of their grief-related journey.

4. Stress that all are welcome, whatever the circumstances that created their grief. Share what grief is about and the feelings they will likely be going through on their grief journey. Share that they might be overwhelmed and feeling like they might not wish to continue GriefShare, but inform them that if they just keep coming, things will get better.

5. Show a promo video.

6. Using your Session Agendas as a guide, briefly describe what happens in a weekly GriefShare session. (Be sensitive to people who may be shy or concerned about sharing during the group discussion time. Remove that stress by stating that there is no requirement that they talk and they will benefit from hearing from others, even if they choose to say nothing.)

7. Take five minutes to walk through the workbook and give an overview showing and explaining the importance of the different sections (video outline for note-taking, From Mourning to Joy, My Weekly Grief Work, personal testimony sections, articles, additional resources, Care Cards). Have an alumni or leader share how helpful the workbook was for him or her.

8. In a circle, invite participants to introduce themselves, using first names only, and share one thing that is their biggest challenge in their grief journey and what they hope to gain from this GriefShare support group. (If more than eight participants, break into small groups. Ideal size: 1–8 per group, plus two leaders.) Remember, some people are very nervous. Make sure they understand they do not have to say anything.

9. While in your small group, go over the Group Member Agreement with participants. Ask them to sign and give the agreement to you for your records before returning to the larger group (if they were in small groups).
Once in the larger group, have an alumnus share a two- to three-minute testimony of healing and hope and how attending a support group and completing the weekly From Mourning to Joy exercises will be beneficial to the participants’ journey.

Share why the three components of GriefShare are important:

- Ask this question: “What three things does every human being need to live?”
- Answer: Air, water, and food.
- You would not eliminate any of these.

- Just as God has provided those three essentials for our survival, GriefShare provides three essentials for us as we journey together: (1) video, (2) group discussion, and (3) workbook exercises.
- Explain that in GriefShare there are three forms of communication:
  - **Video presentation**: Others talk to you.
  - **Group discussion**: You talk to each other.
  - **Workbook exercises**: God talks to you, and you talk to Him.
- Stress how each component is intertwined and important to the healing process.

Familiarize participants with the church layout, parking lot procedures, and the location of the bathrooms and water fountains.

Questions and answers.

Close with prayer.

**BENEFITS OF OFFERING AN ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION FOR NEW GROUP MEMBERS**

- Find the location – church building, parking lot, room location
- Register, complete forms, receive a participant workbook
- Meet and get acquainted with the GriefShare leadership team and church staff
- Meet and get acquainted with others who will be in the group
- Watch a promotional video on GriefShare
- Hear a testimony from an alumnus of GriefShare
- Hear an overview of what to expect during the 13 weeks
- See a snapshot of what the 13 sessions will look like
- Get a hands-on view of the workbook
- Learn about child care arrangements and location (if church is offering child care)
- Ask questions
- Experience the small group atmosphere
- Feel a sense of “ease” and safety; get rid of any jitters or apprehensions
- Be encouraged that they are not alone on this journey
- Gain assurance that there is hope and help for their journey
- Invite other persons experiencing grief to come with them for the first session
BENEFITS OF OFFERING AN ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION FOR LEADERS

- Take care of housekeeping items (registration, distributing workbooks, forms)
- Meet group members who will be coming and get to know their circumstances
- Give an overview of what to expect during the 13 weeks
- Answer questions
- Pray before the first session for those who have already registered
- Experience a calm and gentle start, especially if prone to large numbers
- Set the tone for the small group atmosphere
- Identify any child care needs
- Be better prepared for the first session
- Check supplies and workbook inventory in preparation for the first session
- Have a “practice run” before the first session with job assignments
- Check equipment and room setup
- Encourage group members that they are not alone on this journey
- Give assurance to group members that there is hope and help for their journey
- Pray with other leadership team members for the first session and the group members
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
back of the workbook.
- Encourage participants to do the From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises for the next week. Explain that this material will be reviewed during a portion of the discussion time.
- Encourage note-taking during the video; refer to the video outline in the workbook.
- Go over group guidelines; refer to page ix in the workbook.
- Option: Have members sign a Group Member Agreement (see LeaderZone Library).

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 41 MINUTES)

DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
- Before each session, review the discussion questions. They are provided merely as a guide to facilitate discussion. Be careful not to interrupt productive discussion for the sake of getting through all the questions.

AS A GROUP FACILITATOR, REMEMBER:
- Do not attempt to assume the role of a counselor.
- Be in control; keep people on track.
- Watch body language and eye contact.
- Silence is golden—listen and probe.
- No cross talk (do not allow side conversations when someone else is talking).
- Trust God to meet group needs.
- Don’t get into a debate (theological or any other).
- Use gentle interruptions.

REMINDE GROUP MEMBERS OF DISCUSSION GROUP GUIDELINES:
- Everyone is encouraged to share during the discussion, but is not required to.
- No cross talk (no side conversations when someone else is talking). Be well-mannered and willing to listen.
- The group is not designed for counseling.

Be wise in offering advice.
- Speak from personal experience and do not try to force your opinion on others.
- Don’t rank losses.
- Confidentiality – What is said in the group stays in the group. A good, simple rule to remember is “Never tell someone else’s story.”

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. What has your grief experience been like?
2. How are you coping with the pain of your grief?
3. Share a time when you felt uncomfortable expressing your grief.
4. What point in the video was the most significant to you?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Make Bibles available for participants. Some will not have Bibles. Plan to have gift Bibles available. Let group members know they are welcome to a personal copy.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).
NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC: CHALLENGES OF GRIEF
- Find out more symptoms of grief and how to start treating them.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
- See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.
Call the GriefShare helpline at 800-395-5755 or 919-562-2112. Visit the GriefShare LeaderZone at www.griefshare.org/leaderzone and create your own user account.

- Participate in the Leaders’ Forum
- Update your Find a Group listing
- Access promotional tools
- Find leadership tips in the Library
- Learn about training opportunities
- Access the store
OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- More eye-opening reasons why their pain is so overwhelming
- Some of the overlooked, yet common, effects grief has on their mind, body, and spirit
- How to get things done when they don’t feel like they have any energy

WHAT TO EXPECT
At this stage in the development of your group, you will find a range of feelings among the group members. Some are still uncomfortable about expressing emotion and openly talking about how they feel. Others have returned enthusiastically after finding the first session helpful. It is important to continue to work on helping each person feel comfortable and accepted.

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Again this session, you should plan to spend extra time setting the foundation for the GriefShare program. You won’t go into this much detail in subsequent weeks, but doing so at the beginning of the first two sessions helps group members understand the process and structure of your program.

WELCOME THE PARTICIPANTS
- Introduce your leadership team.
- Share announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
- 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 back of the workbook.
- Encourage participants to do the From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises for the next week. Explain that this material will be reviewed during a portion of the discussion time.
- Encourage note-taking during the video; refer to the video outline in the workbook.
- Go over group guidelines; refer to page ix in the workbook.
- Option: Have members sign a Group Member Agreement (see LeaderZone Library).

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
NOTE: If you find that group members are not completing their workbook exercises, we encourage you to read the LeaderZone Library article “Homework: They Won’t Do It.”
1. What Scriptures from this week’s exercises stood out to you?
2. Day 2: The writer of Psalm 10:1 said that he couldn’t sense God’s presence. At what times have you felt that way?
3. How did you respond to Day 2, question 3?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 35 MINUTES)

DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Before each session, review the discussion questions. They are provided merely as a guide to facilitate discussion. Be careful not to interrupt productive discussion for the sake of getting through all the questions.
AS A GROUP FACILITATOR, REMEMBER:
- Do not attempt to assume the role of a counselor.
- Be in control; keep people on track.
- Watch body language and eye contact.
- Silence is golden—listen and probe.
- No cross talk (do not allow side conversations when someone else is talking).
- Trust God to meet group needs.
- Don’t get into a debate (theological or any other).
- Use gentle interruptions.

REMIND GROUP MEMBERS OF DISCUSSION GROUP GUIDELINES:
- Everyone is encouraged to share during the discussion, but is not required to.
- No cross talk (no side conversations when someone else is talking). Be well-mannered and willing to listen.
- The group is not designed for counseling. Be wise in offering advice.
- Speak from personal experience and do not try to force your opinion on others.
- Don’t rank losses.
- Confidentiality – What is said in the group stays in the group. A good, simple rule to remember is “Never tell someone else’s story.”

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Please give me a one-sentence response to the following question: In your opinion, what was the most significant point of the video?
2. What has surprised you about the extent of your grief?
3. What do you miss the most about your loved one?
4. Do you believe the pain of grief will last forever? Why or why not?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).

NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC: THE JOURNEY OF GRIEF - PART 1
- Learn practical tips to make it through the difficult days ahead.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
- See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.

Call the GriefShare helpline at 800-395-5755 or 919-562-2112. Visit the GriefShare LeaderZone at www.griefshare.org/leaderzone and create your own user account.

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- Access promotional tools
- Find leadership tips in the Library
- Learn about training opportunities
- Access the store
3

THE JOURNEY OF GRIEF - PART ONE

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- Helpful goals to set on their journey of grief
- How to deal with those who try to rush them through their grief
- How long the journey of grief typically lasts

WHAT TO EXPECT
- Hopefully, your group members are getting to know each other and are becoming comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings.
- If new members join your group in this or future sessions, look for ways to make them feel welcome.
- One way to do this is to have group members introduce themselves and give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- While you might think this process seems repetitive to existing group members, it is very helpful to new members and it helps people remember names and stories.

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
1. If you could share one Scripture from this past week’s exercises with another grieving person, which one would it be, and why?
2. Day 2: Whose expression of grief do you most identify with?
3. Day 3: In response to question 3, what ideas did you list of ways you can move closer to God?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 42 MINUTES)

DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.
- Everyone is encouraged to share during the discussion, but is not required to.
- No cross talk (no side conversations when someone else is talking). Be well-mannered and willing to listen.
- The group is not designed for counseling. Be wise in offering advice.
- Speak from personal experience and do not try to force your opinion on others.
- Don’t rank losses.
- Confidentiality – What is said in the group stays in the group. A good, simple rule to remember is “Never tell someone else’s story.”

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Have you felt that others are trying to rush you through your grief? If so, how have you responded to that in the past? Based on what you learned today, how do you plan to respond in the future?
2. The hosts said it’s likely you’ve already made progress toward some of the goals of grief. Which goals have you begun making progress on? (Acceptance, turning to God,
expressing your emotions, or establishing a new identity)
3. Please share about a time when you were ambushed by grief. (What caused it? Where were you? How did you respond to it?)

**WRAP-UP**

**PRAYER REQUESTS**
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

**REMINDERS**
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).

**NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC:**
**THE JOURNEY OF GRIEF - PART 2**
- Find out things you can do to make your grief journey more bearable.

**LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)**
- See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

**QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.**
Call the GriefShare helpline at **800-395-5755** or **919-562-2112**. Visit the GriefShare LeaderZone at [www.griefshare.org/leaderzone](http://www.griefshare.org/leaderzone) and create your own user account.

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- Learn about training opportunities
- Access the store
OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- Why it’s important to put effort into their healing
- How the events surrounding their loved one’s death affect their grief
- The best ways to deal with their loved one’s belongings

WHAT TO EXPECT
From this point forward, your group will begin to develop patterns and its own personality. Look for unhealthy patterns (such as group members who dominate conversation), and do your best to keep the group healthy and focused on its purpose. Maintain a “culture of openness,” and train your group to embrace new participants who join your group.

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
NOTE: If you find that group members are not completing their workbook exercises, we encourage you to read the LeaderZone Library article “Homework: They Won’t Do It.”
1. What stood out to you from Susan’s story?
2. Day 4 addresses common fears people have after the death of a loved one. What can you relate to in Psalm 46:1–3?
3. Day 4: What can you do to make turning to God a habit when you begin to fear?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 37 MINUTES)

DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Which person in this session’s video was most memorable to you? Why?
2. How have you struggled with what to do with your loved one’s belongings or when to begin sorting through them?
3. How good a job have you done taking care of your physical health since the death of your loved one?
4. What did this session motivate you to do to take better care of yourself?
5. What significant life events occurred near the time of your loved one’s death? How is your interpretation of those events (the meaning you’re giving to those events) affecting your grief?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.

Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.

Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).

NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC: GRIEF AND YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

See how grief affects your relationships and what you can do about it.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.

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5 GRIEF AND YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- How the death of a loved one affects their friendships
- Why solitude can be a blessing and a curse
- How to deal with friends who don’t understand their grief

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
1. What verse or truth from this past week’s exercises encouraged you the most?
2. What did you learn (or were reminded of) from your work on Day 2’s exercise?
3. Day 2: What can you do as you wait for God to help you to heal from your grief?
4. Does waiting on God to heal you mean that you don’t do anything to facilitate your recovery from grief? Why or why not?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 40 MINUTES)

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. How has your loved one’s death affected your relationships with others?
2. How have you benefited from spending time alone/solitude?
3. This session challenged us to put an effort into maintaining relationships with our friends. What will you do to stay connected to your friends and family?
4. What will be some of the challenges to staying connected with others?
5. What did you think about the section of the video that encouraged us to have mercy on those who offend us?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).
NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC: WHY?
- Bring your toughest questions and emotions to God. He can handle it.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
- See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.
Call the GriefShare helpline at 800-395-5755 or 919-562-2112. Visit the GriefShare LeaderZone at www.griefshare.org/leaderzone and create your own user account.
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6 WHY?

SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- God wants them to share their feelings with Him
- Why being honest with God is an expression of faith
- What God has to say to them about their “why” questions

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY
EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
1. Which day’s exercise was the most helpful to you? Why was it helpful?
2. In what ways did the Scriptures from Day 4’s exercise renew your thinking about how you should treat or respond to insensitive comforters?
3. Day 4 suggests that focusing on God's mercy helps us be merciful to others. In what ways have you experienced God’s mercy?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 43 MINUTES)

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Prior to watching this session, did you believe you had permission to lament (express your grief)? Why or why not?
2. What are some of the “why” questions you are dealing with, regarding your loved one’s death?
3. How did this session help you with your questions about why your loved one died?
4. What outstanding questions do you have? Based upon what you learned in this session, what should you do with your unanswered questions?
5. How did this session restore your confidence in God’s goodness and love for you?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).
NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC: GUILT AND ANGER
- Learn what to do with regrets, guilt, bitterness, and anger.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
- See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.
Call the GriefShare helpline at 800-395-5755 or 919-562-2112. Visit the GriefShare LeaderZone at www.griefshare.org/leaderzone and create your own user account.

- Participate in the Leaders’ Forum
- Update your Find a Group listing
- Access promotional tools
- Find leadership tips in the Library
- Learn about training opportunities
- Access the store
GUILT AND ANGER

SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- How to deal with false guilt
- How to grieve conflicted relationships
- How to handle grief-related anger

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY

EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
1. How did you benefit from completing last week’s exercises?
2. What was the most difficult verse for you to accept in this past week’s study? Why was it hard to accept?
3. Day 4: In your grief process, have you ever become aware of misconceptions about God that you hold, that were making your grief experience more difficult? If so, what were they? Why is it helpful to become aware of such misconceptions?
4. Day 5: Can you see yourself eventually making a statement similar to the one Job makes in Job 42:1–5? What will have to change for you to be able to say something like that?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 43 MINUTES)

DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. What are some of the “What if” questions or “If only” thoughts you are dealing with?
2. How did this session help you process those thoughts and questions?
3. What did you learn from the drama where Mike talked to Marlon about his anger?
4. Whom is your anger directed toward?
5. Based on this session, what do you think you need to do about your anger?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMININDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).
NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC: COMPLICATING FACTORS

- Learn how to deal with problems that are complicating your grief.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

- See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.

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SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- How traumatic experiences affect grief
- How to deal with nightmares and flashbacks
- How their thinking affects their emotions

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY
EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
NOTE: If you find that group members are not completing their workbook exercises, we encourage you to read the LeaderZone Library article “Homework: They Won’t Do It.”

1. Day 1: How does Psalm 139:16 help you deal with your “What if” questions and regrets?
2. If you’ve struggled with being angry with God, how were you affected by Day 4’s exercise?
3. Based upon what you learned from Day 4’s exercise, what are some ways you can show God reverence and respect as you grieve your loved one’s death?
4. Day 5: What did this lesson teach/remind you about the nature in which God forgives? Are you sure that you’ve experienced God’s forgiveness?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 33 MINUTES)

DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Have you dealt with flashbacks or nightmares?
2. Which of the suggestions for dealing with these issues do you think you’ll try?
3. Do you feel like you’ve had the opportunity to share how your loved one’s death has uniquely affected you? Or has your story been lost in the stories others have shared? Explain.
4. What unique experiences of your grief do you wish you could tell others about?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINdERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).
NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC: STUCK
Find out how to avoid becoming stuck in grief.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
See “Debriefing... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.
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SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- How to prevent getting stuck in grief
- Common misconceptions that hinder healing
- Why their path to healing isn’t always smooth

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY
EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
1. Iris’s story revealed that she felt like “nothing good happens” to her. Have you ever felt that way? If so, why?
2. How did this week’s exercises help you deal with feelings of dread and anxiety?
3. Which verse in this week’s exercises most reinforced the importance of controlling your thoughts?
4. Day 3: What steps will you take, or have you taken, to control your thinking?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 44 MINUTES)

DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Do you think you’re stuck in grief? Why or why not?
2. Prior to this week’s video, did you hold to any of the beliefs that we learned we need to “tune up”? If so, which ones?
3. Why is it hard for you to do your grief work?
4. How do you think you’ll benefit from doing your grief work? Or, what benefits have you seen from the grief work you’ve begun?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).

NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC:
LESSONS OF GRIEF - PART 1
- Learn practical strategies that will help keep you on the path of healing.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
- See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.
SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- An often-overlooked reason that grief is so painful
- Why going to church can be so difficult
- The benefits of helping others

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK

NOTE: If you find that group members are not completing their workbook exercises, we encourage you to read the LeaderZone Library article “Homework: They Won’t Do It.”

1. Which day’s exercise stood out to you the most from this past week’s From Mourning to Joy exercises? Why was that lesson so significant to you?
2. Day 1: Describe an incident or season in your grief journey where you found yourself living more by sight than by faith. How did living by sight affect your emotions and thinking?
3. Please share your responses to Day 1, question 3.
4. What lessons did you learn from completing Day 5’s questions?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 32 MINUTES)
DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. How difficult has it been for you to go back to church after your loved one’s death?
2. Which of the suggestions regarding going back to church did you find the most helpful?
3. This session recommended using a checklist to help you remember what you need to do. What have you done to help yourself remember important things you need to do?
4. Do you think you’re ready to begin helping others right now? Why or why not?
5. What are some small ways you can begin helping others?
6. How have you been blessed by helping others?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.

Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).

**NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC:**
**LESSONS OF GRIEF - PART 2**
- Discover what your grief is teaching you.

**LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)**
- See “Debriefing ... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

**QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.**

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SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

WEEK 14 CELEBRATION SESSION
As you make plans to end your 13-week cycle, consider having a Week 14 Celebration Session. See page 117 for more information.

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- Who they are now that their loved one is gone
- Why no one grieves perfectly
- What grief can teach them about relationships

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
- Welcome the participants.
- Share any announcements.
- Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
1. After completing this past week’s exercises (and participating in GriefShare), how has your appreciation for God’s Word grown?
2. Day 2: What was it like to visualize Scripture? Is this something you think you’ll try again? Why or why not?
3. Day 3: What have been some of the challenges you’ve experienced going back to church?
4. What did Day 3’s exercise teach you about the importance of spending time with other Christians?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 37 MINUTES)
DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. What are some of the lessons you are learning from your grief?
2. How have you begun to value relationships more since the death of your loved one?
3. How has your grief taught you to depend more upon the Lord?
4. How have you become more aware of your weaknesses and faults in the midst of your grief journey?
5. How did this session help you see how much God loves you and how eager He is to forgive and show mercy?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).

NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC: HEAVEN
Get a glimpse of what you can look forward to in heaven.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
See “Debriefing... What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.
Call the GriefShare helpline at 800-395-5755 or 919-562-2112. Visit the GriefShare LeaderZone at www.griefshare.org/leaderzone and create your own user account.

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12 HEAVEN

SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

WEEK 14 CELEBRATION SESSION
As you make plans to end your 13-week cycle, consider having a Week 14 Celebration Session. See page 117 for more information.

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
  - What heaven is like
  - Whether they should communicate with their deceased loved one
  - Whether near-death experiences are reliable descriptions of heaven
  - More answers to their questions about heaven

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.
  - Welcome the participants.
  - Share any announcements.
  - Begin session with a short prayer.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY
EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
  1. Day 1: This lesson lists some of the common thoughts of those who are taking on grief as an identity. Have you found yourself thinking similar thoughts? If so, which ones?
  2. Day 1: What does Galatians 3:26 & 28 say is the most important aspect of a Christian’s identity?
  3. Day 4’s exercise reminds us that God is good. What is one of the best evidences of God’s goodness?
  4. Day 5 provides Scriptures and quotes from other grieving people that demonstrate that admitting we’ve done wrong is a part of life—even when we’re grieving. What was your reaction to this lesson? What grief-related behaviors do you think you need to confess/take from?

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 41 MINUTES)
DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
  - Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
  - Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
  1. What did you learn about heaven or the afterlife that you didn’t know prior to this session?
  2. What are you looking forward to doing in heaven?
  3. Do you have any doubts about whether your loved one is in heaven? How are your doubts affecting your grief? What have you learned from today’s video that has relieved your doubts?
  4. What did you think about the drama where the young woman thought that she wasn’t going to heaven? What did you learn from that?

WRAP-UP

PRAYER REQUESTS
  - Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).
REMINDERS
■ Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
■ Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
■ Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
■ Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).

NEXT WEEK’S SESSION TOPIC:
WHAT DO I LIVE FOR NOW?
■ Discover how to continue moving forward in your grief.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
■ See “Debriefing … What Is It?” in the LeaderZone Library.

QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.
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SESSION AGENDA | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

FINISH SESSION DYNAMICS
As this is the final session in the 13-week series, we recommend you give special consideration to how you will wrap up your GriefShare group. Please consider these two options:

- **ADD AN ADDITIONAL “CELEBRATION SESSION” IN THE 14TH WEEK.** This format facilitates an informal atmosphere for fun, food, and fellowship. See “Wrap-up A” on the next page and “Agenda for Week 14 Celebration Session” on page 117.

- **EXTEND SESSION 13.** If Session 13 is your closing night and you do not have the option for the Celebration Session described above, consider extending your dismissal time by an additional 15 minutes after the conclusion of the discussion groups. This additional time will allow for closure, testimonies, and celebration. If you elect this option, be sure to coordinate your schedule with your child care providers. See “Wrap-up B.”

OVERVIEW
Participants will discover:
- Why moving forward is a necessity
- Why it’s a process
- Why peace and pain will always coexist

30–60 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR SESSION BEGINS
Leadership team arrives 30–60 minutes prior to start time for setup and prayer.

OPENING THE SESSION
Start the session promptly at the published time.

DISCUSS FROM MOURNING TO JOY
EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS WEEK
1. How did this week’s lessons about heaven encourage you?
2. Day 1: What comfort do you find from reading that one day there will be no more crying or pain (Revelation 21:4–5)?
3. Day 4: The Bible teaches that the only way to heaven is to believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. Based on that understanding, how did you respond to Day 4, question 3?
4. Day 4: What Scriptures from Day 4’s lesson (or other passages of Scripture) form the basis of your certainty that you are going to heaven? Encourage those who are not sure to refer to the article on page xii in their workbooks to learn more about how to gain certainty.

VIEW VIDEO (TIME: 41 MINUTES)

DISCUSS VIDEO

LEADING THE DISCUSSION
Remind group members of discussion group guidelines, if needed for new participants.

ICEBREAKER/OBJECT LESSON
- Have participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name, situation of loss, and how they found this group.
- Choose from the list of sample icebreakers (p. 119) or object lessons in the LeaderZone Library.

VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Do you feel like you’re ready to move forward? Why or why not?
2. Do you feel like moving forward will be misinterpreted by your friends and family?
3. Have you been through GriefShare before? If so, why did you decide to participate again?
How has doing so helped you?
4. Do you agree with Lois Rabey’s statement that peace and pain can coexist? Why or why not?
5. What characteristics of your loved one do you want to pass on to your loved ones who are still living to always remember?

WRAP-UP A
(IF YOU ARE HAVING A WEEK 14 CELEBRATION SESSION)

PRAYER REQUESTS
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

REMINDERS
- Do From Mourning to Joy and My Weekly Grief Work exercises in the workbook.
- Tear out and use the weekly Care Card found in the back of the workbook for encouragement.
- Go online and take advantage of “A Season of Grief” daily emails.
- Return for the next session (and invite a friend who might be experiencing grief to attend as well).
- Share details about the Week 14 Celebration Session.

LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)
- Have leaders fill out a Leader Feedback Form (see LeaderZone Library).

WRAP-UP B
(IF YOU ARE CLOSING YOUR 13-WEEK CYCLE TONIGHT)

1. Allow 10 minutes for the group to share final thoughts and have closure with the fellow group members they’ve been with over the weeks. Instruct participants to complete the following two statements (do one full round of answering the first statement; then everyone goes around and answers the last statement, 30 seconds or less to give their answer):

   - The most meaningful thing about GriefShare for me was ...

   - The most important step I took as a result of GriefShare was ...

2. Provide participants with a copy of the Participant Feedback Form and ask them to complete the form right then and give back to you.

3. Encourage participants to tear out the Thank You Card from the back of their workbook and ask them to complete and give back to you for you to give to your pastor.

4. Briefly discuss workbook page 132 “What’s Next?” and encourage participants to continue growing and finding comfort, peace, and healing on this new journey.

5. Encourage participants to complete the From Mourning to Joy exercises and My Weekly Grief Work for Session 13.

6. Provide an opportunity for participants to give a short testimony on how GriefShare has helped them. An optional activity would be to ask participants to give “one-sentence only” testimonies on what they got out of the last 13 weeks.

7. Acknowledge your leadership team and applaud their service.

8. Acknowledge each participant by giving some creative gift or memorable item that is low cost (booklets, gift Bible, decorative item, or something positive for participants to remember their 13-week journey). Certificates are available to download from the LeaderZone Library. Certificates for your leadership team are also available.
9. Provide each participant with a few brochures for the next 13-week cycle of your GriefShare group. Encourage participants to invite others who are experiencing grief to come to the next 13-week cycle, and invite present group members to come back and go through the seminar again.

**PRAYER REQUESTS**
- Close with prayer (a member of the leadership team should always lead this prayer).

**LEADERSHIP TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSION & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)**
- Have leaders fill out a Leader Feedback Form (see LeaderZone Library).

**QUESTIONS? WE’RE HERE TO HELP.**

Call the GriefShare helpline at **800-395-5755** or **919-562-2112**. Visit the GriefShare LeaderZone at [www.griefshare.org/leaderzone](http://www.griefshare.org/leaderzone) and create your own user account.

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WEEK 14 CELEBRATION AGENDA

Your leadership team should consider planning a Week 14 Celebration Session. The primary reason we recommend doing so is a Week 14 Celebration Session provides a capstone for the entire GriefShare experience and facilitates an informal atmosphere for fun, food, and fellowship.

Here are planning guidelines that will help you create a memorable and special event:

- Regarding food, provide an opportunity for each participant and leader to sign up to bring something small (your menu can consist of beverages, finger foods, desserts, a full meal, or a combination). An option could be for your church or GriefShare leaders to provide the beverages and paper products (cups, plates, napkins, utensils) and your participants to bring the food. You could even consider catering this special evening if it’s in the budget.
- Have the room looking nice with some music playing. This will give an air of celebration for the event. Enjoy a time of food and fellowship (30 minutes).
- Invite interested group members to give a short testimony (two to three minutes each) on how GriefShare has helped them.
- An optional activity would be to use an object lesson or provide some time of “one-sentence-only” testimonies from participants on what they got out of the last 13 weeks. Enlist one or two of your leaders to prepare to give a personal testimony (two to three minutes) of their grief recovery journey and how God ministered to them during that season of life. Participants will feel freer to share their own stories if someone else has already shared.
- Another option would be to have each participant complete the two following sentences:
  - The most meaningful thing about GriefShare for me was ...
  - The most important step I took as a result of GriefShare was ...
- Encourage group members to complete the Participant Feedback Form, which can be downloaded from the LeaderZone Library, and the Thank You Card from the back of the workbook (to share with your pastor). We recommend you hand out the form and ask them to complete the form right then to give back to you.
- Acknowledge your leadership team and applaud their service. Thank your participants for attending and for being part of the journey.
- Acknowledge each participant by giving some creative gift or memorable item that is low cost (booklets, decorative item, or something positive for participants to remember their 13-week journey).
- Certificates are available to download from the LeaderZone Library. Having complimentary GriefShare books to give out—Through a Season of Grief and Grieving with Hope—is a nice touch. Also, consider giving out door prizes!
- Provide each participant with a few brochures that have your next class dates already noted, inviting them to attend again and to bring a friend who might be experiencing grief.
- Encourage them to attend a local Bible-believing church, and invite them to your church.
- Close with prayer.