

Healing from Grief – Joan Webb

Joan is a graduate from our 2008 session of Living Waters, and is currently serving on the leadership team as an assistant group leader.

My heart felt like it was in a constant state of grief. Every morning I woke up – it was there. Not depression... this was different. It was a ripping of my heart that needed to be put to rest. On my own I could not get there, no matter how hard I tried. Grief has many stages, and depending on what part of my life I was focused on, I was at a different stage of grief... all at the same time. This grief wasn't just from loss of life (though some of my pain had this root), but loss of love, of a dream, of trust, of friendship, of intimate relationship, of protection and personal boundaries.



Yes, I experienced a conglomeration of denial, realization of my woundedness, anger, sadness and finally with the help of Living Waters... acceptance and rest. Everything that the Lord did on this journey was worth it. And everything He continues to challenge me with, no matter how difficult, will have its reward if I choose to follow Him in it. On this journey I learned that God never intended us to live in a constant state of grief; He intended us to live in freedom with occasional times of grief that He would carry us through.

I remember, before Living Waters, when a counselor in a private session said to me, "Your life wounds are not average... they are definitely above average." When we began to evaluate the cumulative nature of my life events, I began to understand why I felt this constant pain. And I learned there are many approaches to address woundedness. Part of my healing came from counselors who helped me draw out the detailed truth about my past with the hope that it would give me relief in the present. But just understanding my source of brokenness did not provide the level of relief I longed for. I needed the deeper healing that only the Holy Spirit could lead me to. I needed Divine healing. Not just for myself, but to thrive in my marriage and family – to be free to love well and be used by God for His good purpose. This was my heart's desire, and I didn't want the broken pieces of my life (past or present) to be an obstacle.



I'm in a much better place today. I have the tools in place to deal with the emotional triggers that once dominated my life, especially my marriage relationship. The Lord is drawing me to a place where I can live out His ways more often, regardless of the choices people around me make. Instead of harboring offenses and allowing bitterness to take root, I'm learning to forgive and let my Heavenly Father bear my hurt. And when I fail to live in the image of Christ (when I mess up),

I'm no longer bound up in shame, but free in His grace. The Lord is the lover of my soul, my trusted friend, my companion and my protector (among many other things). He always was... I have Living Waters to thank for showing me this healing truth.

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