

A Personal Message from the Support Group Facilitator

This group is for those who have experienced loss and wish to learn the “lessons from those who have lived through sorrow”. Group members come from all walks of life and have experienced all kinds of losses. While we have many members have lost spouses, some have lost children, brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers and other special people in their lives.

I am a native Floridian residing in Merritt Island, Florida with my wife Jennifer. I have two adult children and a granddaughter. I have a Bachelors of Arts Degree in Psychology and Masters of Public Administration from the University of Central Florida. I began my career in counseling and social work, moved on to human services administration and now serve as the Parks & Recreation Director for Brevard County, Florida.

I have been facilitating a loss support group called “New Beginnings” for Grace United Methodist church since September 2001. With limited experience, the first group was started with four widows from Grace United Methodist Church. I agreed to facilitate the first group as a favor for a friend who worked at the church. The book they were using had 10 sessions, so I innocently said, “I can do anything for ten weeks”. I feel those ten weeks were in God’s plan for my life, because they produced a change in my life. I began to understand about those who have suffered loss and realized that God is present in all our lives – especially in the valleys.

The first four widows finished the ten weeks and sent me off to look for some materials to study that showed how people survived loss. You see, I learned from the first group that grieving is not over in ten weeks, one year or ever. The materials currently used in the support group support a year-round learning and sharing environment, so that grieving individuals can start at any time and end when they are ready to “move on”.

Today, the “New Beginnings Loss Support Group” continues every Monday night at Grace United Methodist Church. The original four widows have all moved on and are doing well.

I wish each of you the best in your grief journey and urge you to look carefully – God is there!

Don Lusk
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