



from **pain**  
**2 purpose**

Rediscovering Joy  
after Suffering a Major Loss

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P U B L I S H I N G

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# Grief Recovery Group Leaders Guide

## The Purpose of the Book

The intention of From Pain 2 Purpose is to help a person who is suffering a major loss, primarily the loss of a loved one, to begin a journey of grieving in a productive way so as to move forward in life and find a new normal. The problem is that most of us have not been taught how to grieve in a productive way. Consequently, we allow certain obstacles to mix in with our grief that hinder us from moving forward emotionally. This book is designed to help a person let go of those unproductive things to avoid becoming stuck in a continual cycle of unresolved grief.

This book is about embracing a series of repeated choices on a journey that consists of letting go and continuing to let go of unproductive roadblocks to healing such as regrets, guilt, anger, and fear. The journey also involves a corresponding series of repeated choices that require the grieving person to hold on and keep holding on to productive assets, such as healing comfort, forgiveness, trust, and assurance that God truly cares and is with us.

Your task as a group leader is to be a gentle and caring guide to help initiate the letting go and holding on journey for those who have suffered a major loss. In doing this, you are initiating a ministry of hope and comfort to help bring healing to broken hearts, renewed spiritual strength, a renewed sense of wholeness, emotional peace of mind, and eventually a renewed sense of purpose.



# How to Use This Material

This book is designed to be used by grieving people and their partners who have been chosen to journey with them. Each participant is to read through chapters of the book and then complete written and verbal exercises called “Assignments” and “Experientials” that occur at the end of each section. The person suffering a loss responds in writing to the questions, which are designed to enable an assessment of where the person is in the journey toward recovery. Then the grieving person and the partner are to meet and share openly what they have written and how they are processing their grief.

The group meetings you will conduct are vital to this process. You will be providing a place of hope and an atmosphere of emotional care and safety. Each partnering team of two will openly share what they are discovering together, which will result in all the participants mutually ministering to the others in the group. This will create a sense that these grieving people are not alone in their difficult journey toward recovery.

As a group leader, you, too, may be suffering a major loss. If so, you will want to engage with a partner and complete each exercise prior to your group meeting. This will give you an opportunity to take the initiative and be the first to share openly what you personally are discovering.

The meetings you will conduct are based largely on the Assignments and Experientials (Encounters with Jesus and Experiences with Scripture) within the book. There are three sections, titled as follows: “There Is Comfort for You to Receive,” “There Are Promises for You to Claim,” and “There Is a Purpose God Wants to Reveal.” The Assignments and Experientials within these sections are designed to lead a person to experience the truth of Scripture and encounter the person of Jesus so he or she can find comfort and healing for a broken heart.

Each person will need to have a copy of *From Pain 2 Purpose*. So prior to the introductory meeting, be sure to order sufficient copies of the book. Go to: [themulletfamily.com](http://themulletfamily.com) or [greatcommandment.net/resources](http://greatcommandment.net/resources) to place your order.



## Conducting the Introductory Meeting

In this meeting, your group agrees to be part of the recovery class based on this book. At this meeting, you will set a place and time for the six meetings.

Share the purpose for this course by explaining the purpose of this book, which is covered under the subheading appropriately named “The Purpose of this Book” on page 207. Explain that there are journaling exercises within the book called “Assignments” and “Experientials” that are encounters with Jesus and experiences with Scripture. The participants and their partners are to complete these exercises by engaging in times of prayer, devotion, and self-reflection, and record their feelings on pages provided in the book as they progress through the healing journey. These completed exercises will be discussed in each subsequent group meeting. Each meeting should last approximately one hour, not counting fellowship time prior to or after the meeting.

If any participants grieving a loss do not bring a partner to the meeting, discuss the need for them to seek someone out who will take the journey with them.

Pass out the books and explain that they are to read Chapters 1–3 and complete the first Section, “There Is Comfort for You to Receive,” on page 00. Close in prayer.



# The First Grief Recovery Meeting

Gently probe to determine how many partnering teams actually read Chapters 1–3 and completed the Assignments and Experientials. It is likely that some partnering teams will not have completed their reading and Experientials. During your session, you can allow them to withdraw to a more private space where they can work through the material together. Once they complete all or a portion of the Assignments and Experientials, ask them to share with the group as much information as they feel comfortable revealing. Follow this same procedure at each subsequent meeting.



Consider asking the group these questions:

1. What was your response to the idea of “letting go and holding on”? Do you sense that you have some things you need to let go of and hold on to? (Allow time for every partnering team to respond. Emphasize that grief recovery is not a destination but rather a series of repeated choices of letting to and holding on.)
2. Was there anything else in Chapter 1 that stood out to you?
3. Chapter 2 encouraged us to accept the reality that our hearts have been broken and that we must choose to patiently endure the healing process. How has that been a challenge for you to accept?
4. Scripture says that “we belong to each other, and each needs all the others” (Romans 12:5 TLB). How difficult is it for you to accept emotional care from another person? (Discuss the truth that we know we need God, but we don’t always realize that we also need one another to give us comfort for a broken heart.)
5. For you who are partnering with your friend, did you get any fresh insight into what comfort is and isn’t? (Discuss.)
6. Did anyone need to let go of a sense of unworthiness or self-reliance in order to receive comfort? (Discuss and point out that we need to let go of any sense of unworthiness and self-reliance we might have and hold on with gratefulness and humility to comfort that is being offered.)
7. Share your own experience of completing the Assignment and Experiential portions of the material. Then ask other partnering teams to share how working on the exercises went for them. (Specifically, ask for their response to how it makes them feel to know there is a comforting Jesus who weeps for them.)

As you close the meeting, mention the importance of reading Chapter 4 and completing the exercises prior to the next group meeting. Close in prayer.

## The Second Grief Recovery Meeting

Gently probe to determine how many partnering teams actually completed Chapter 4 and the exercises. This may be a difficult assignment for some to complete. But if at least one team completed the chapter, consider asking the following questions:

1. Share with us, to the extent you feel comfortable, how it went for you when you created your chart listing past hurts and the comfort you received. (Rejoice with those who report receiving comfort.)
2. Discuss the possible struggle you experienced in finding comfort for past losses. Also discuss your feelings about the importance of finding that comfort. (Explain that if we haven't addressed our past hurts, those unresolved hurts build up a backlog of suffering in our lives. While those unresolved painful experiences remain in our past, we carry them into our present, and they negatively affect us. In fact, some of those major unhealed experiences can radiate into our present grief and hinder us from moving forward emotionally.)
3. Share your own experience of completing the experiential exercises in the chapter. Then ask other partnering teams to share how completing the exercises went for them.
4. As you close the meeting, remind the group that in the next session they are to have read
5. Chapter 5 and completed its Assignments and Experientials. Close in prayer.



## The Third Grief Recovery Meeting

Gently probe to determine how many partnering teams read the assignment and completed the exercises. Consider asking the group:

1. Have you struggled at all with the question of why God allowed your loved one to die? Have you questioned why pain and suffering and death exist in this world? Have you been angry that they do? (Assure the group that it's okay to struggle with God for allowing suffering and death. Reference to section "Blinded to His Goodness" in Chapter 5 as needed.)
2. How does God feel about your loss? Do you think Jesus truly relates to what you are going through? Why or why not? (Reference to section "He Truly Hurts When We Hurt" in Chapter 5 as needed.)
3. Discuss the need to let go of any anger and questioning of why God has allowed our suffering. Emphasize the need to hold on to the belief that God is truly good and that we can claim his promises as our own. What are some promises that you are currently holding on to? (Note the various scriptural promises identified in Chapter 5.)
4. Share your own experience of completing the experiential exercises. Then ask if one or two partnering teams would share how it went as they completed the exercises.
5. As you close the meeting, remind the group that before the next session they are to read Chapters 6, 7, and 8 and complete the Assignment and Experientials. Close in prayer.



# The Fourth Grief Recovery Meeting

Gently probe to determine how many partnering teams have read Chapters 6–8 and completed the exercises.

Consider asking the group:

1. No relationship is perfect or ever fully completed. So it was with the loved one you lost. After having a relationship cut off while imperfect and incomplete, it's natural to feel a measure of guilt for what you perceive as your responsibility for the imperfection and incompleteness. Those if-onlys and not-enoughs plague you with regrets. We were asked to list some of our if-onlys and not-enoughs in the chapter. Who would be willing to share some of yours? (Share from your own experience first.)
2. The good news is that there is something that can free us from our guilt and regrets. What is it? (Reinforce that we can let go of our guilt and regrets and take hold of God's forgiveness. This allows his grace and mercy to flood our soul, even to the extent of enabling us to forgive ourselves.)
3. Make the point that we don't actually need people to respond to our seeking their forgiveness to be forgiven. Ask the group: Was that a refreshing truth to you? (See Chapter 7, section titled "The Power of Forgiveness.")
4. Did you find any freedom of forgiveness related to any guilt or regrets lingering from your imperfect relationship with your lost loved one? Please share what you're willing to reveal.
5. We may even need to forgive our loved one for some past hurt he or she caused us. Did anyone have some forgiving to do? (Reinforce that we can let go of any resentment, irritation, displeasure, dissatisfaction, or ill feelings we may have toward our loved one—or anyone else involved in the death. We can take hold of a forgiving spirit and forgive as we have been forgiven.)
6. The experiential exercises in Chapter 8 are designed to facilitate more freedom and your choice of forgiveness. Share your own experience of completing these exercises. Then ask if one or two partnering teams would share how the process worked for them.

As you close the meeting, remind the group that before the next session they are to have completed Chapters 9–10 and the Assignment and Experientials. Close in prayer.

# The Fifth Group Recovery Meeting

Gently probe to determine how many partnering teams read Chapters 9–10 and completed the exercises. Consider asking the group:

1. After a major loss, it's natural to feel some anxiety and to fear what's going to happen next. Have you experienced any of that? Please share.
2. How do we find emotional peace of mind? (Ask someone in the group to read the first five Scripture passages found in the section titled "Security and Peace of Mind" from Chapter 9. They are John 14:27; John 16:32–33; Jeremiah 29:11–14; Psalm 94:19; and Psalm 34:6.) These passages assure us that God loves us and is really with us. When we truly believe this, we can begin to let go of anxieties and fear of the future and hold on to the assurance that God is with us no matter what.
3. It's not easy to keep trusting your future to God's hands when life feels unfair and out of control. Has life tended to feel unfair and out of control following the loss of your loved one? If so, what have you tended to do to counter that?
4. Ask someone to read 1 Peter 2:19–23. Then ask: How could Jesus entrust himself (leave his well-being) in God's hands when he was so mistreated and suffered unjustly on the cross? (Answer: Because Jesus believed his Father judged justly and ultimately had everything under control.) We must let go of the unproductive perspective that we control our own destiny and hold on to our trust that God has our present and eternal future in his hands.
5. Share your own experience of completing the experiential exercises. Then ask if one or two partnering teams would share how it went as they completed them.

As you close the meeting, remind the group to read Chapters 11–12 and complete the Assignment and Experientials by the next meeting. Close in prayer.

# The Sixth Grief Recovery Meeting

Gently probe to determine how many have read Chapters 11–12 and completed the exercises. Consider asking the group:

1. Ask someone to read Romans 8:28. What “good” is God working together in this passage? (We may see nothing good about death, but God is working circumstances together that include death to produce good for us. Look at the section titled “Not Just Going through It, But Also Growing through It” on page 000. Consider reading aloud the information beginning with the fourth paragraph and continuing through the rest of that section.)
2. This last “let go and hold on” may be the most difficult: We are called to let go of our past normal, offer God our present broken and shattered lives, and hold on to a new normal and renewed purpose that God will reveal. Ask: It may be too early to ask, but does anyone sense a renewed purpose that is giving God honor and glory out of your broken and shattered life?
3. Grief recovery is an ongoing process. We don’t let go of the cherished love and memories of our loved ones. Yet they are no longer with us physically or relationally. So we must let go of our past normal that included their presence and accept a new normal without them. Do you realize this is not a one-time letting go? We must repeatedly let go of those unproductive obstacles such as regrets, guilt, fear, and anger in order to keep moving forward. Are you at the point where you can realize that? (Discuss.)
4. To see where we are on our journey, let’s go to Chapter 12 and read the section titled “Assessing Your Progress.” There are seven areas to assess. We’ll begin with the first one, which is “Receiving Comfort” on page 000. Will someone read the two paragraphs under “Receiving Comfort”? Then let’s each answer those questions as a way of assessing our progress thus far. (You take the lead and vulnerably answer the first set of questions. Once you complete the “Receiving Comfort” assessment with the group, go on to “Backlog of Hurts” and continue through all seven sections. This will allow all participants to share where they are on their journey. Emphasize that we must avoid putting pressure on ourselves if we’re not as far along as we hoped. We also need to resist feeling pressure from others.)
5. Remind those in your group that this is only the beginning. The journey of grief recovery is a series of repeated choices that involve continually letting go and holding on. Some of those choices will be repeated for a lifetime. (Discuss ways to stay connected and maintain a caring relationship with each other.)
6. Close in prayer.