

Some Facts about Change...

- change is inevitable
- some change is unwelcome and even unfair
- change can invoke great feelings of loss and grief
This grief should be recognized, acknowledged and validated
- even “good” change can be difficult
- there is no “right” way to cope with change and loss:
Each experience is unique
- we are all capable of cultivating resiliency-but some may need more guidance than others
- encourage one another to accept help and companionship from others: it’s OK to be vulnerable, perhaps even courageous.

We can neither heal nor change

that which we do not acknowledge. -anon

Final Thoughts...

We can best help each other by acknowledging the inevitability of change, loss and grief and encouraging the living of these experiences in a purposeful and healthy manner.

At times, parts of our society, do not understand the need for this journey and do not support these endeavors; thus, the responsibility of providing support falls to those of us who do understand.

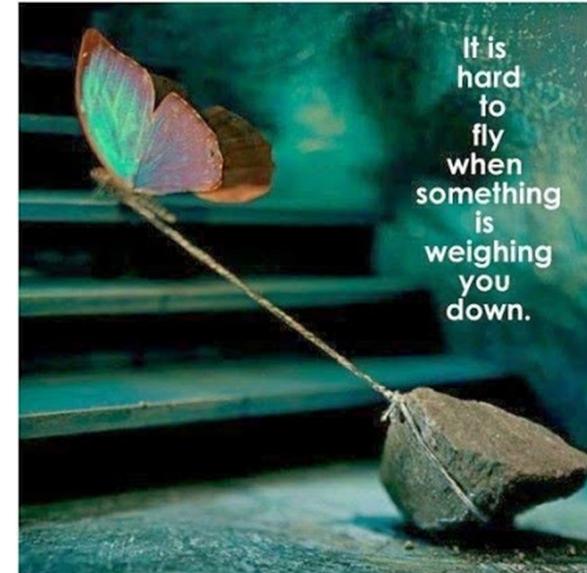
*Understanding is the first step to
acceptance, and only with acceptance*

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Change, Grief and Loss

National Youth Ministry Conference



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*You cannot stop the birds of sorrow
from flying over your head, but you
can prevent them from building nests*

Grief: *the reactions and readjustment that people must go through when they have experienced change or loss in their life.*

Grief and loss in Young Adulthood....

times of significant change and transition

- from College to University
- from dependence to independence
- Graduation
- Choosing a career path
- Significant relationships
- Search for purpose and meaning

Change is constant for young adults. Each of these “normal” changes can bring excitement, happiness, sadness, hope and significant stress. Most will cope effectively, some will not.

All of life’s changes involves some aspect of loss. It is important to remember that ...

- loss usually evokes grief which can impact on every dimension in our lives
- the inevitability of change, loss, and grief should be acknowledged.

Unexpected Change Events....

- death of parent/family member/friend
- relationship breakups **e.g.** family/friends
- chronic illness/disability/accident
- academic failure
- unemployment
- loss of special possession
- death of pet

Grief is difficult for everyone, regardless of age. The more you care about someone or something, the more you will grieve/react when change occurs.

Stuck for Words... talking to a grieving friend

- DON'T** avoid grieving people
- DO** ask how things are going
- DON'T** try to minimize the loss
- DO** say something to acknowledge their loss
- DON'T** be afraid to say the name of their loved one
- DO** let them cry/talk about their loss
- DON'T** tell them how they should or shouldn't feel
- DO** let them ask WHY?
- DON'T** compare grief experiences
- DO** remember significant days
- DON'T** tell them you know exactly how they feel
- DO** listen

Effective Listening...

- **Stop** talking
 - Give **full attention** to the person speaking
 - Convey **acceptance** no matter what
 - Use eyes, ears and **heart** to listen
 - Tune in to the **feelings** behind the words
 - Put aside **assumptions** and judgements
 - **Respect** silences
 - Don't **interrupt**
 - Pay attention to **non-verbal** communication
 - **Restate** what was said if necessary
- Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move*

The difference between can and cannot are only three letters.