

IT'S FINE.

PART 3: GOOD GRIEF

INTRODUCTION

Most of the emotional stuff we cover up and refuse to deal with revolves around loss. We all struggle with expectations that went unmet, goals we failed to achieve, or dreams that were broken. How we handle our loss matters. It impacts the quality of our lives. If we bury those negative emotions alive, they will come back to haunt us . . . and the people we love.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Were you taught to deal with loss by burying your feelings, replacing the loss, and waiting for time to heal everything? If so, who taught you that? Did someone model it for you?
2. **Read John 11:33–35.**
Jesus was intentional about building relational connections that caused him to feel deeply. Do you ever avoid building relational connections because of the pain and loss that can result from them? What would it look like for you to build and strengthen those connections instead?
3. **Read Psalm 23:4.**
The threat of loss creates fear. But we can walk through loss fearlessly if we trust that God won't leave us alone. He walks in grief *with* us. Have you ever seen someone demonstrate trust in God in the midst of loss and grief? If so, did it surprise you in any way? What do you think it would take for you to be able to trust God that deeply?
4. Have you avoided grieving something you've lost in the past? In what ways do you think the people around you may be feeling what you've failed to grieve?

TIP: If you're having trouble identifying whether you're struggling with past loss, remember that "a dollar response to a fifty-cent incident" is a sign you've buried an emotion. Is there any area of life in which you tend to overreact?

5. What can you do to begin to make space for good grief? Review the process below, and jot down a personal next step for each of the actions.
 - Feel your feelings and express them freely.*
Name what you feel. Be specific. Give yourself permission to feel it.
 - Slow down and review the loss.*
Name what you've lost. Examine why it was important to you and how it influenced the way you saw yourself and your life.
 - Invite God to heal the wounds of your loss.*
Time doesn't always heal wounds. God does.

How can your group support and encourage you as you take steps to grieve?

MOVING FORWARD

Would you make space for good grief? God rarely heals things we hide or avoid. But if we admit our losses, be free with our grief, and invite him to walk with us, it makes space for him to enter into our grief and provide healing.