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Crisis Care Training International

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Grief and Mental Health

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A great resource on grieving from Navigators.

[How to Grieve in Light of Resurrection Power](#)



In Focus

We see so many mental health struggles and a lack of understanding of people's true identity in Christ today. Ultimately, it seems to break down into a lack of hope and desire to be the person God has designed them to be. How can you have hope if you do not understand your purpose?

Included in this issue of The Barnabas Letter are two articles. One is grief, which seems to be something our society wants to rush through (or put off) more and more each day. Another is a great article from [The Colson Center](#), which describes the mental health struggles and lack of hope in today's world. There seems to be a strong connection between these two issues and ultimately how the enemy is using it to confuse many in our world today, especially youth and children. These issues affect not only children, but adults as well. As we often teach in our CCTI courses, we cannot help children well if we have unresolved issues ourselves, so keep that in mind as you read both articles.

As always, our prayer is that these articles and resources motivate you to act, see how the enemy is distorting God's truth, and respond with the love of God to these hurting individuals. May you be enriched, encouraged, and equipped as you prayerfully consider your response. CCTI is here to help if you need any suggestions or resources!

Serving Him Together,

Amy Wilson
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Grief in Today

Amy Wilson



On a quick internet search for our world's definition of grief, here's what AI responded with:

Grief is the deep and poignant emotional distress caused by the loss of someone or something important, particularly through death. It encompasses a range of emotional, physical, and psychological responses to loss. [mentalhealth-uk.org](https://www.mentalhealth-uk.org), [wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org)

While this may be a decent, overarching definition, it doesn't capture how individualistic grief is. Your reaction to a loss may not be the same as mine, nor your feelings (and the intensity of those feelings) the same as mine. Some may try to comfort another in times of deep anguish, and the grieving person often greatly appreciates the effort, but that person knows there is truly nothing that



can be said or done to restore what was lost. It is "just something one has to work through in their own time." Some people try to encourage getting back into a routine and going about life as quickly as possible. While structure and routine are concepts that CCTI highly encourages through our STOP Model, we recognize that talking and time, and parental (or

peer) support are equally as vital. Unfortunately, there is not a prescription or a set number of days that is acceptable for helping a person move past their grief. With all of this in mind, how do we recognize when someone is "stuck" in their grief?

Often, we need to look for progression. Is a grieving person working towards meeting their personal needs and meeting their obligations after a couple of weeks have passed? Seeing this person re-enter the world does not mean their grief has ended, but it is a great first step towards regaining that structure needed. Encouragement for this progression should be offered, while also recognizing that they are still in the midst of grief. Offer a listening ear, help with a task, and patience as he or she works back into their routine and tasks. As we know. Organized Play is a great way to help a person open up to talking and sharing their feelings and experiences. Offer to go on a walk, play a game of basketball or tennis, sit and knit together — whatever is something you can both do and enjoy — and let the person take the lead on when they are ready to talk. This moves us into that Talking and Time when that person is ready. It may not occur on the first Organized Play event (or the second or third), but it does give that person the knowledge that you are there with them and available, that you are not going anywhere or trying to rush the process. You are willing to take on that role of

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Parental (Peer) Support and want to help them if they are triggered, want to process verbally, or just don't want to be alone.

What happens if we see that a person is not progressing or willing to participate in any of the suggestions above? As we will see in the next article from The Colson Center, more

and more individuals are finding a new identity in their struggles and allowing the enemy to keep them from moving forward. As a Christian, this is not truthful or loving. We have to gently remind them that this is not God's design for those still here on earth. If we have breath, then we have purpose. We have to look for what good God has allowed to occur in the midst of the tragedy. Maybe you are the one to help gently point that good out when the other cannot or will not

see it. We have to remind the grieving person that this is not who they are or their new identity. Give them a daily task to look for one good thing each day. Help that person to find reasons to be thankful again and work back into their life with the new norm of that person or things no longer being a part of it. If you see that a person is not willing to move forward despite your and others' efforts, that may be a sign that professional help should be sought.

Grief is not what God designed for our world, and sadly it is part of the fall. All the parts of our being (physically, emotionally, spiritually) know this truth, and we have to cling to His promises for what is to come. May we all find ways to cling to God's Word, His truths, and His promises, and to encourage others in them when tragedy comes our way!

Grief is not
what God
designed for
our world...



Psalm 119: 25-32, ESV

- ²⁵ My soul clings to the dust;
give me life according to your word!
²⁶ When I told of my ways, you answered me;
teach me your statutes!
²⁷ Make me understand the way of your precepts,
and I will meditate on your wondrous works.
²⁸ My soul melts away for sorrow;
strengthen me according to your word!
²⁹ Put false ways far from me
and graciously teach me your law!
³⁰ I have chosen the way of faithfulness;
I set your rules before me.
³¹ I cling to your testimonies, O Lord;
let me not be put to shame!
³² I will run in the way of your commandments
when you enlarge my heart![a]



Amy Wilson is the Director of Education for Crisis Care Training International. She is passionate about helping children and youth in crisis find their healing and identity in Jesus Christ.

Mental Health and Christian Hope

John Stonestreet and Dr. Timothy D. Padgett



Back in April, a Psychology Today article noted how some people today, especially younger people, are finding identity in their psychological struggles. For those who do, the point is not overcoming their struggles or achieving personal growth. Rather, it's about belonging. As the writer put it:

We are living in an age where psychological explanations are prioritized above all others. Indeed, therapy speak has permeated everyday life. It has taken over conversations and relationships, leading people to claim boundary violations, accuse others of gaslighting, or see narcissists everywhere they go.

Between the rise of a hyper-therapeutic culture and the critical theory mood, a quick way to achieve social status is to have a condition, preferably one that can't be challenged. There are, of course real, pressing psychological issues facing many, especially in the rising generation. While such people deserve to be taken seriously, as Abigail Shrier observed in her book *Bad Therapy*, the mental health industry incentivizes mental health struggle. It has normalized the need to therapize even basic tasks of childhood—like making friends. The result has not been better health, only greater dependency.



The cultural drift to valorize victimhood and medicate most behavior is not providing a generation with hope. In fact, it's the opposite. Despite greater mental health awareness and increased access to care than at any other time in human history, rates of suicide and psychological distress are up while rates of healing are down.

We ought not be surprised when young people believe what they are told: that they are victims and that the world has no ultimate meaning, so they must make up their own reality to be their “true, authentic” selves. Essentially, we’ve placed the weight of making the world on their shoulders and are surprised when they stumble under the weight of the task. Kids are told to “live their truth,” “be themselves,” and “follow their heart.” In school they learn that the entire cosmos is one big accident. From social media they learn that they can’t stack up to the experiences of others. From their favorite Disney movie they learn that the hero is a villain and the villain is misunderstood. Without any fixed reference points for knowing who they are, why they exist, and how they should live, the therapist assuring them that to be a victim is compelling indeed.

Nearly a century ago, the Austrian psychiatrist Victor Frankl wrote that the key factor in human survival—even basic physical and mental health—was hope. After spending years in a Nazi concentration camp, seeing the worst a fallen world could be, he argued in *Man’s Search for Meaning* that people need to believe in something bigger than themselves to endure even the greatest of horrors. From those insights, Frankl developed a style of therapy built on the idea that people could get better. He didn’t deny suffering, but he did insist that suffering wasn’t meaningless. His goal was not to keep people dependent on therapy or medication. He wanted to help people find restoration and healing.

Hope is at the core of the Christian message. Though the Biblical view of sin rejects entertaining optimism about the human condition or unrealistic wishful thinking about the future, it presents the Creator putting Himself at the center of this fallen world in order to renew it and reconcile us. Christ is making all things new, and that includes those who are lost and hurting.

If Frankl was correct, if there can be no healing without hope, God’s people are uniquely positioned to offer a way forward in this cultural moment. For those who don’t know who they are, or why they are, or how to live, there is hope. In fact, we know Him by name . . . Jesus, the Christ.



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Resources

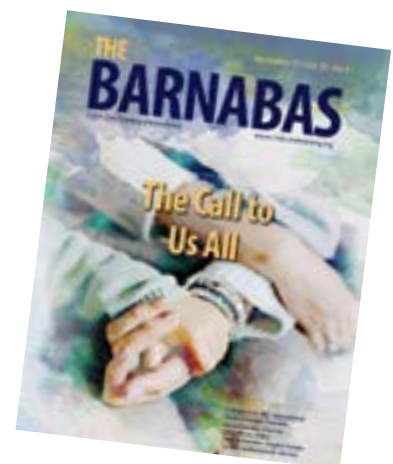
1. Do you want to help someone struggling with crisis or trauma? Sign up to take our beginning course, *Trauma and Crisis Care*. Our video course allows you to work through the materials on your own timeframe while having a CCTI Certified Trainer help and guide you as you study. Find out more today at info@crisiscaretraining.org.



2. Our Trauma Recovery Workbook, *There is Hope for Me*, is a resource designed for children and youth to help them work through any grief they may be experiencing. Learn more about this FREE resource by visiting <https://crisiscaretraining.org/free-resources/>.



3. Would you like to receive CCTI's bi-monthly newsletter? Let us know by emailing us at info@crisiscaretraining.org. You can also see samples of what is included via our [blog](#).



For more information, contact us at:

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