

Celebrating Life & Grieving Loss



On this All Saints Day OPC's Family Life Ministry invites you to a deeper consideration of God's blessings through the lives of our loved ones. Celebrating life and grieving loss can yield greater self-knowledge and powerful transformation – if we have the courage to participate fully in the process. Below is one simple method for doing both (celebrating and grieving) as you consider the saints in your own life.

Create a Memorial Collage

To begin to balance the pain of your loss with pleasurable memories, you need to start uncovering and remembering the warm and special things about that person so you can hold on to those key memories. By completing the collage, you can begin to find that balance. To help yourself work through the stages of grief, complete the following exercises.

1. Creating a collage.
 - A. Obtain a poster board 24 inches by 36 inches.
 - B. Carefully search through family photos and select those of your lost loved one that are meaningful to you.
 - C. Next look in magazines/newspapers and cut out words, phrases,

and other pictures that reflect your feelings about the lost loved one.

D. Arrange the pictures and words/phrases and secure them on the poster board in any way you feel best expresses your feelings.

2. When you have completed your collage, respond to the following:

A. Explain briefly the pictures you chose and which two have greatest significance for you. _____

B. Explain the reasons for the words/phrases you chose. _____

C. Looking over the collage you've created, what does it say to you about the person and your feelings? _____

D. Do the pictures bring back any of the following feelings? (Circle any that apply.)

Anger

Disappointment

Other: _____

Hurt

Abandonment

Other: _____

Guilt

Regret

Worry

Rejection

Explain: _____

Prayer

Lord, everything in me resists following you into the Garden of Gethsemane, to fall on my face to the ground before you. Grant me courage to follow you all the way to the cross, whatever that might mean for my life. And then, by your grace, lead me to resurrection life and power. In Jesus' name, amen.

For more information about celebrating life and healthy grief:

visit www.goodgriefcenter.com or consider checking out one of Family Life Ministry's several books on the topic. FLM also sponsors *The Empty Room*, a group dedicated to the support of those who have lost a child. *"We will share experiences, compassion, love, understanding, hope, memories, tears and laughter."* This is a group where people can come together, through the common bond of pain and grief, and support each other through the journey of healing, led by Les Leasure and Marilyn Babuscio. The Empty Room will meet the 3rd Tuesday of every month, *in the Marie Berg room, from 7:00-9:00 PM.* Pass the word to anyone in your community, place of work, etc. that you know will benefit from this support group. If you would like to investigate other resources for navigating the grieving process (professional counseling, support groups, etc), please contact Brad Walters, bwalters@oakmontpresby.org, or Jane Kinter, jkinter@oakmontpresby.org for more details.