

WITNESS – Reaching out to others
(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)

Go around the group and share a challenge you are facing so that others might pray for you.

When each person has shared pray for each other, with each person praying for the person on their right.

Conclude by praying

Dear Father,
you caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
help us to hear what you are saying to us today,
help us to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest your truth
that through your holy word we may embrace your love
and know the hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY

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5: Enlarge Your Soul

WELCOME – Breaking the ice
(Aim for 10 minutes)

As you were growing up, how did you deal with disappointments?
Give one example

WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord
(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)

Light a candle as a reminder that Jesus the light of the World is with you and pray that you will know his presence as you meet today.

Read Luke 24. 13 –19a

In silence tell Jesus what is on your mind—what would you like to understand better or have greater assurance about?

Pray the Lord's prayer together.

FOR NEXT WEEK'S STUDY:-

Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day*
(Zondervan 2014) Pages 117-131

WORD – Applying the truth
(Aim for 40 – 45 minutes)

Play the DVD introduction now

1 Briefly share one loss you have experienced this past year. How has this loss impacted you?

Bible Study – Matthew 26:31-44

The end of Jesus' vibrant, popular, earthly life and ministry appeared to be an enormous loss to his disciples and followers. In this passage we will observe two very different approaches to that loss – the apostle Peter and Jesus. Read Matthew 26:31-44.

2 Peter had deeply invested in Jesus and his kingdom, having left everything to follow him. What is Peter's response to Jesus' shocking prediction (vv.31-36)?

3 Below is a list of common defences we often use to protect ourselves from grief and loss. Circle the common defences Peter uses to protect himself against the painful reality of Jesus' prediction:

- Denial
- Minimizing (making something appear less serious than it actually is)
- Blaming others (or God)
- “Over spiritualising”
- Blaming himself
- Rationalizing (offering excuses and justifications)
- Intellectualising (giving analysis and theories to avoid personal awareness or difficult feelings)
- Distracting

- Becoming hostile
- Medicating (with unhealthy addictions to numb our pain)

4 Based on the list above, can you name defences you tend to use when dealing with loss and setbacks, and why?

5 It is important for us to remember that Jesus was both fully human and fully God. Spend a few moments looking at Jesus in vv.36-41. In contrast to the list above, what are some of the ways Jesus deals with and moves through his losses?

6 What about Jesus example of grieving most speaks to you about embracing your own grief and loss?

7 Write down the most significant losses in your life so far. Roughly how old were you, and how did you feel about each loss at the time?

8 One of the central messages of Christianity is that suffering and death bring resurrection and new life. Are there any losses you have not yet embraced where new life is still waiting to be birthed?