

Encouragement in Suffering

It's never easy to accept the fact that good can come from our pain and suffering, but during those moments when you are searching for answers, you may find comfort and encouragement in some of these possibilities.

- Enables God to teach us patience (James 1:3)
- Allows us to comfort and encourage others (2 Cor. 1:6)
- Keeps us from sin (2 Cor. 12:7)
- Enables us to glorify God (1 Peter 4:16)
- Share in Christ's suffering (Phil 3:10)
- Strengthens our faith (1 Peter 5:10)
- Enables others to be saved (2 Tim. 2:10)
- Conforms us to Christ's image (Roman 8:28, 29)
- Shows others how to comfort us (2 Cor. 2: 1-7)
- Moves others to pray for us (2 Cor. 1:10-11)
- Motivates us to go to God for help

(Ps. 30:6-7)

Author unknown *

Five ways to reach out to a hurting friend

Listen. Remember when all you wanted was someone to listen, someone who wouldn't give advice or try to fix it?

Ask how you should pray. Don't assume that you know the area in which your friend desires prayer. Ask about what he feels are his areas of need.

Remember those "tough days"- because she will. Write down those days that are devastating for your friend and send simple cards of acknowledgement during the anniversary. Don't be afraid to acknowledge that one year ago she was diagnosed with cancer by sending a card that simply says, "Thinking of you today, call me if you need to talk..."

Remember to celebrate! There will be good news too, and your friend will need someone to be as excited as she is when those test results arrive. Rarely do people understand the impact a simple test result can have on one's life. So don't be afraid to celebrate!

Be honest. Say, "I wish I knew what to say, but I don't. I'm here for you, though." If you start your sentence by saying, "I probably shouldn't say this..." then don't! Talk to her about what she feels she needs from you, and then offer it unconditionally.

Lisa Copen

Five lessons to be learnt from Geese

1. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird following. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if the bird flew alone.

Lesson: Join with others on the same journey.

2. Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front.

Lesson: Don't try and go it alone.

3. When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position.

Lesson: Share the leadership role.

4. The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: Support and encourage the leader.

5. When a goose gets sick or wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it is able to fly again, or dies. Then they launch out on their own with another formation, or catch up with the flock.

Lesson: Standby those who are in need.

Author unknown

Your body is designed to be self healing, yet sometimes things go astray and do not work as they ought and so we are left with a chronic illness or pain.

Chronic illness or pain has been described as heading out on a beautiful holiday and then finding yourself stranded in the worst place you can imagine. You are unable to leave and have to make the best of where you have been stranded.

One consolation that we have is that we are not alone. We have a God who cares for us, and about us, and in one way uses our suffering to bring us closer to him. See 'Reasons for Suffering.'

Maybe you don't have a chronic illness or pain. Maybe a family member or one of your friends suffers. There are many things that you can do to assist them. A few examples are shown in 'Five ways to reach out to a hurting friend'

There are also some lessons that can be learnt from observing a flock of Geese in flight, notice how they support and care for each other, offer encouragement and stand by one another no matter what the circumstance. Take a look at 'Five lessons you can learn from Geese'

Suffering chronic illness or pain is not the end of the world. life can be challenging in different ways. Place your life in God's hands and see where He will lead you along the pathway of life.

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Suffering Chronic Illness and Pain

