

When Life Hurts: Responding to Life's Painful Events with Courage and Care

53th Shepherd Conference-- Pain of God, Love of God



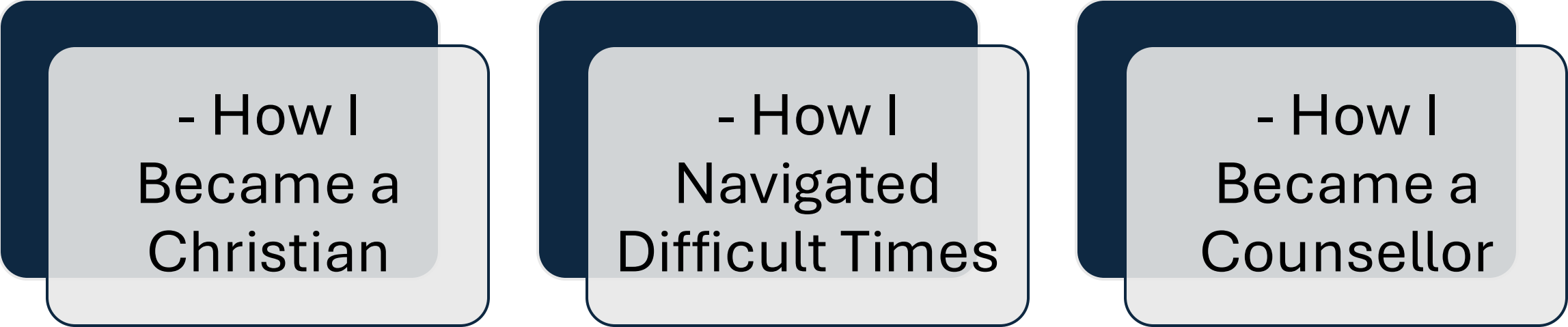
Introduction

Almighty God loves and cares for us—
so why do painful things still happen?
Is it because God lacks the power to
protect us?
Does He not care about the suffering
we endure?
Or could it be that He allows us to
experience pain as part of giving us
something even greater?

Throughout life, we encounter pain in
the form of unexpected incidents,
accidents, illness, and relational
struggles. During such difficult times,
many of us have likely asked these
questions again and again.

So, when we face hardship—how
should we respond?


My Stories




- How I
Became a
Christian

- How I
Navigated
Difficult Times

- How I
Became a
Counsellor



How I Became a Christian

- 
- A pivotal season that drew me to Christ
 - How my faith became personal and real



How I Became a Counsellor

- What led me into the field
- How faith and life experience inform my work
- Why I feel called to walk with others in pain

A Client Case



A close-up of a hand reaching upwards, palm facing up, towards a bright, glowing sun. A faint rainbow is visible in the background, arching across the sky. The overall scene is bathed in warm, golden light, creating a sense of hope and divine presence.

Psalm 62:1

“Truly my soul finds rest in God; my
salvation comes from Him.”

“Be still, and watch how the
Lord will fight for you today”.

Exodus 14:14

An Atypical Response

Job 1:20–22

At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.” In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

Job’s response was not denial or avoidance. He grieved honestly—yet also turned to God in worship.

Job 1:20-22

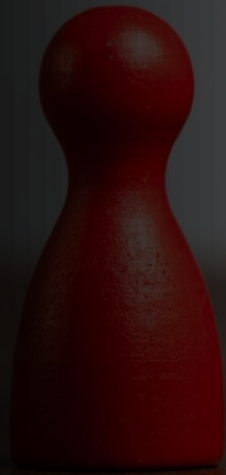
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Common Responses to Painful Events



Emotional



SHOCK, DISBELIEF,
SADNESS, GRIEF



ANGER, IRRITABILITY, GUILT,
SHAME



FEAR, ANXIETY, NUMBNESS,
EMOTIONAL OVERWHELM

Cognitive

Overthinking,
overanalyzing

Difficulty
concentrating or
making decisions

Negative or
intrusive
thoughts

Self-blame,
“What if...” or “If
only...” thoughts

Loss of meaning
or purpose

Confusion,
catastrophizing

Mental fog,
forgetfulness

Behavioral



Physical



FATIGUE, MUSCLE
TENSION



SLEEP
DISTURBANCES



CHANGES IN
APPETITE



HEADACHES,
STOMACH ISSUES



RAPID HEARTBEAT
OR PANIC
SYMPTOMS

Spiritual





How I
Navigated
Difficult
Times

A PAINFUL SEASON

WHAT HELPED ME
COPE

LESSONS I CARRY
WITH ME TODAY

What I can control and what I can't

What I can control and what I can't

Data source: @mindfulenough | Infographic design by @agrassoblog for educational and motivational purposes





**SELF-CARE
ISN'T SELFISH**



You will fly
again
when it's over.

Butterflies rest when it rains
because it damages their wings.
It's okay to rest during the
storms of life. You will fly
again when it's over.





Self-Care Strategies

Self-care isn't selfish. Take time to reflect and identify helpful practices in each area:

Emotional:

Mental:


Physical:

Behavioral/Social:

Spiritual:

Self-reflection or Group Discussion Questions:

- Which response type (cognitive, emotional, behavioral, physical, spiritual) do I relate to most?
- What emotions do you find most difficult to sit with?
- How do you care for your emotions in healthy ways?
- What kinds of thoughts tend to come up for you during painful experiences?
- Have you found any strategies that help you manage unhelpful thinking?
- How does your body tend to respond when you're under stress?
- Are there physical practices that help you feel more balanced?
- What changes have you noticed in your behavior during hard times?
- What small routines help you feel grounded again?
- Has your sense of meaning or faith shifted after painful events?
- What spiritual practices bring you peace?
- What is one tool or strategy you'd like to try this week? (Remember--one thing at a time!)



Closing Reflection and Encouragement

