

EMPOWER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SESSION 1

Ground Zero

SESSION 2

Dealing with Disaster

SESSION 3

Brace for Impact

SESSION 4

Healthy Foundations

SESSION 5

Emotional Alarm Bells

SESSION 6

Snakes and Ladders

SESSION 7

Thought Court

SESSION 8

Cross Examined

SESSION 9

Meaning Making

SESSION 10

Purpose from Pain

SESSION 11

Reconciliation to the
Rescue

SESSION 12

Certainty Amid
Uncertainty

Dealing with Disaster

ACTIVITY SHEET



No matter how emotionally strong you might think you are, nothing truly prepares you for devastating news. Shock, despair, anger, fear and denial can quickly overwhelm you. Yet scripture reveals there's a mysterious message to be found in the mess. You're encouraged to hold on to hope, not to be anxious but rather trust. God can turn your tragedy into triumph.



SESSION OBJECTIVES

This session is designed to help you understand:

- (a)** the importance of reorienting the kinds of questions we ask
- (b)** the pros and cons of different coping strategies
- (c)** coping well is only the first step towards resilience, rehabilitation and recovery

Common Questions

When tragedy strikes, people typically look to God for answers to specific questions. The most commonly asked questions are 'what' and 'why'?



When bewildered and confused, you may go in search for clarity, meaning and direction. Place a tick next to those questions you may have already found yourself asking:

	✓		✓
Why is this happening to me?	<input type="checkbox"/>	What exactly happened?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What, are you punishing me God?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Why now?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Why did you allow this to happen God?	<input type="checkbox"/>	What's the point in going on?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What have I done to deserve this?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Why didn't you warn me in advance?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Why have you abandoned me?	<input type="checkbox"/>	What will be left at the end of all this?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q: Are there any other 'what' or 'why' style questions you find yourself asking?



EVEN IF THERE WERE ANSWERS FOR YOUR 'WHAT' AND 'WHY' QUESTIONS, THEY DON'T TYPICALLY SATISFY. THAT'S WHY, PEOPLE WHO 'GROW' THROUGH TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES ASK DIFFERENT QUESTIONS. INSTEAD OF 'WHAT' AND 'WHY', THEY ASK 'WHO' AND 'HOW'.



Place a tick next to the following 'who' and 'how' questions that may be helpful to ask:

	✓		✓
How am I going to use this situation to become a better version of myself?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Who is for me and not against me?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who is able to get me out of this mess?	<input type="checkbox"/>	How will I practically apply the lessons I've learnt from this?	<input type="checkbox"/>
How can I come through this trial stronger than ever?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Who protects and supports me?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who can I talk to that will really listen and encourage me through this ordeal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	How am I able to use this pain to my advantage (serve a greater purpose)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
How can I not just go through it, but grow through it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Who can do exceedingly abundantly above and beyond all that I can ask?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q: Are there any other 'who' or 'how' style questions you would benefit from asking?

Q: Are there any questions you've been asking that you need to surrender to God?

Coping Styles

There are three classic styles of coping with tragedy:

(A) EMOTION-FOCUSED COPING

(B) SOLUTION-FOCUSED COPING

(C) AVOIDANT COPING

Cost-Benefit Analysis



From the list of ineffective coping strategies below, identify:

(a) What's the short-term benefit that might be enticing?

(b) What's the likely long-term negative consequence?

Alcohol	Pornography	Gambling
(a) Short term benefit	(a)	(a)
(b) Long term consequence	(b)	(b)
Drugs (medication or illicit)	Overspending (retail therapy)	Social withdrawal
(a)	(a)	(a)
(b)	(b)	(b)
Missing meals or under eating	Interpersonal conflict	Self-harm
(a)	(a)	(a)
(b)	(b)	(b)
Binge watching TV shows	Binge or overeating	Reckless sexual pursuits
(a)	(a)	(a)
(b)	(b)	(b)

When you experience overwhelming pain, it's only normal that you would seek an escape route. However, in the long term, it's disadvantageous to avoid your pain and/or responsibilities. A combination of both solution- and emotion-focused coping is the healthiest way to navigate your way through hardship.



NOTE: PROFESSIONAL CARE: If you have been engaging in problematic or addictive behaviours as a way of coping with your pain, you may benefit from speaking with a qualified Mental Health Professional to gain additional support.

Functional Coping

When you engage solution-focused coping, you'll instinctively focus on resolving problems with a view to moving forward. When you engage emotion-focused coping, you allow yourself to stop, be still, and focus on how you are feeling.



Q: SOLUTION-FOCUSED: What's one practical step you can engage today that will help you move closer towards the goal you established for yourself in Session 1?

IDEAS: Looking after family, taking care of household, schedule a counselling consultation.

Q: EMOTION-FOCUSED: What's one practical step you can engage today that will help you identify, accept and process certain emotions?

IDEAS: Looking after family, taking care of household, schedule a counselling consultation.

WHILE FUNCTIONAL RESCUE STRATEGIES ARE IMPORTANT WHEN FACING AN EMERGENCY, COPING IS ONLY THE FIRST STEP. RESOLUTION AND RESTORATION NEED TO FOLLOW.

