

People Are Born To Shine!

A newsletter rooted in the Christian faith created to inspire and support all people, irrespective of nationality, race, and religion.



EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Coping with Loss & Grief

The feelings of loss and grief can seem overwhelming, without end. It hits you in the gut, spreads throughout your heart, and makes you feel hopeless. The feeling of grief can last for hours, days, weeks, and even months. Feelings of loss can last just as long, even if someone close to you hasn't died.

How do you cope with grief? How do you cope with loss? These are questions that are not easily answered, because the answer varies from person to person. No two people experience grief the same way. So even though most of go through something like the five stages of grief, not all of us will experience them all, nor in any particular order. The good news is that you won't experience these feelings forever—even though it may feel like you will.

The stages of grief and mourning are universal and are experienced by people from all walks of life, across many cultures.

THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF AND LOSS

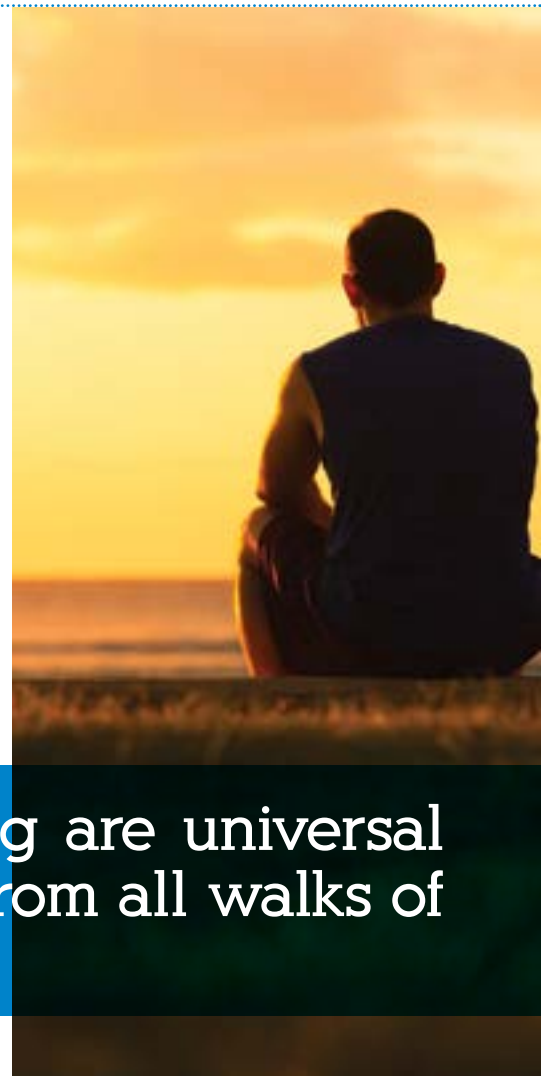
Denial and Isolation
Anger
Bargaining
Depression
Acceptance

People who are grieving do not necessarily go through the stages in the same order or experience all of them.

The stages of grief and mourning are universal and are experienced by people from all walks of life, across many cultures. Mourning occurs in response to an individual's own terminal illness, the loss of a close relationship, or to the death of a valued being, human or animal. There are five stages of grief that were first proposed by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her 1969 book *On Death and Dying*.

In our bereavement, we spend different lengths of time working through each step and express each stage with different levels of intensity. The five stages of loss do not necessarily occur in any specific order. We often move between stages before achieving a more peaceful acceptance of death. Many of us are not afforded the

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Oh! The Benefits of Plums

Plums are packed with an immense range of phenols and flavonoids which offer an impressive range of health benefits.

Christmas Mission 2017

NCF toured hospitals, orphanages and nursing homes to celebrate the birth of Jesus with those unable to celebrate at home.

Making Roads Safer for Motorbikes

Motorbikes and mopeds are involved in a disproportionately high percentage of fatal and serious accidents.

Go Green in Your Home

You can make changes and become an eco-hero without ever leaving your home.

www.najicherfanfoundation.org

Oh! The Benefits of Plums

The health benefits of plums include relief from indigestion, influenza, infection and anxiety-related problems. The antioxidant power of these fruits helps in treating ailments such as osteoporosis, macular degeneration, cancer, diabetes and obesity. They also help in maintaining a healthy heart by reducing cholesterol levels. Additionally, plums improve cognition, boost immunity, improve cellular health, maintain electrolyte balance, keep the nervous system healthy, and aid in skin care and blood clotting.

What Are Plums?

Plums are juicy and delicious fruits that belong to the genus *Prunus* of the Rosaceae family which also includes peaches, apricots and nectarines. They exist in diverse colors and shapes with over 2,000 different varieties.

Plums are broadly divided into three groups: European-Asian (*Prunus domestica*), Japanese (*Prunus salicina*) and Damson (*Prunus insititia*). China is the leading harvester of plums, followed by the United States, Serbia and Romania. Within the U.S., the largest production of plums happens in California.

Along with the hand-picked, fresh variety, plums can also be dried or canned. These fruits are then referred to as prunes.

Plums grow on small deciduous trees which grow to a height of about 10-15 meters and bear fruits with different characteristics based on the country of origin. They are drupes or stone fruits with a smooth pit and a crease running down one side. They contain juicy pulp varying from creamy yellow to crimson red. The color of the outer skin may vary considerably from yellow or dark red to purple or black.

Nutritional Value Of Plums

Plums contain an assortment of healthy components, vitamins and minerals. They are an excellent source of vitamins such as vitamin A, vitamin C (ascorbic acid), folate, and vitamin K (phylloquinone). They are also a good source of vitamin B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), B6 and vitamin E (alpha-tocopherol). The minerals present in plums include potassium, fluoride, phosphorous, magnesium, iron, calcium and zinc. They also supply dietary fiber and are very low in calories without any harmful fats.



Health Benefits Of Plums

They are packed with an immense range of phenols and flavonoids which offer an impressive range of health benefits.

ANTIOXIDANT PROPERTIES

Plums contain vitamin C and phytonutrients such as lutein, cryptoxanthin, zeaxanthin, neochlorogenic and chlorogenic acid. These components possess effective antioxidant qualities which help in preventing the damage caused by oxygen radicals called superoxide anion radicals. The phenols present in plums also extend their protective effect on the essential fats in the neurons and cell membranes against any injuries caused by oxidative stress.

TREAT OBESITY

Plum extracts are valuable for treating obesity and other complications associated with obesity. Studies have shown that consumption of stone fruits such as plums helps in fighting metabolic syndrome, due to the presence of bioactive compounds. The flavonoids and phenolic components such as anthocyanins, chlorogenic acids, quercetin and catechins present in them exert anti-obesity and anti-inflammatory effects on the cells, including the fat cells, and they also help in preventing obesity-related problems such as cholesterol disorders, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

CONTROL DIABETES

Plums exert anti-hyperglycemic effects and help in combating diabetes. Studies have shown that the consumption of plum extracts aids in the reduction of blood glucose and triglyceride levels in the body. The flavonoids present in plums provide protective effects against insulin resistance and help to enhance insulin sensitivity in the body.

PREVENT OSTEOPOROSIS

Consumption of dried plums promotes anabolic and anti-resorptive actions, which aid in maintaining healthy bones. Flavonoids such as caffeic acid and rutin present in plums help in inhibiting the deterioration of bone tissues and prevent diseases such as osteoporosis in postmenopausal women. Polyphenols, along with the

Christmas Mission 2017

For the eighth consecutive year, volunteers from The Naji Cherfan Foundation toured selective hospitals, orphanages and nursing homes in Beirut and Mount Lebanon in December with one important mission—to celebrate the birth of Jesus with those unable to celebrate at home.

Orphans, elderly, patients and their families, nurses and doctors and medical care teams working during Christmas had the chance to celebrate with cheers, prayers and joy!

The Naji Cherfan Foundation teamed up with Father Roger Cherfan from Parish of Beirut, Father Elie Khalil, and Father Valentino Ghoul.

All the places we visited were filled with Christmas caroling, prayers and hope! During the visits, prayers, chocolates, sweets and gifts were distributed to every person celebrating Jesus' birth.

"The elderly were especially happy to see us. We took our time listening to the stories of the forgotten ones who were so happy that someone was visiting them." said Father Roger.

"It is one of the most beautiful days of this season. Everyone was happy when we visited, but I was much happier than they were to share the love of Jesus and the spirit of the season with them." said Rita Abou Jaoude from The Naji Cherfan Foundation team.

Merry Christmas!



Making roads safer for motorcycles and mopeds



Motorbikes and mopeds are less stable and visible, and offer less protection than cars. They are involved in a disproportionately high percentage of fatal and serious accidents, most of which are in cities and caused by human error.

In 2013 for example, over 4,700 riders were killed in the EU. Motorcycle fatalities make up 15% of all road fatalities, while mopeds account for approximately 3%. Together, they account for about 18% of deaths on the road—even though they represent only 11% of all motor vehicles.

Source: ec.europa.eu

Motorbikes and mopeds are on the increase. Particularly in cities, they offer a solution to growing traffic congestion, parking problems and the high cost of private car ownership.

Users range from leisure bikers on high-powered machines to young people and professionals commuting by moped. From 2001 to 2010, the number of these vehicles on European roads rose by 48%, stabilizing at around 34.5 million between 2010 and 2013.

But Vulnerability Exists

"In you, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame. In Your righteousness, rescue me and deliver me; turn Your ear to me and save me. Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go; give the command to save me, for You are my rock and my fortress. Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of those who are evil and cruel."

(Psalm 71:1-4)

Prayer Corner

Will You Further NCF's Work?

The Naji Cherfan Foundation was founded after the passing of the beloved Naji Cherfan. Our main goal is to praise the Lord through community work.

The foundation works to improve the quality of life of the poorest of the poor of all ages, both those who are healthy and those with health problems, and those with brain injury of any kind, resulting from accident, stroke, etc, while promoting Christian values.

If you like the work NCF is doing and wish to participate, we invite you to become a member of our Board. The goal is to share our inspiration and activities in your country. Please contact us for more information at +961 (0)4 522221.

info@najicherfanfoundation.org

Join us for daily news and inspirational messages! Like our Facebook page!



www.facebook.com/najicherfanfoundation

7 Ways to Go Green in Your Home

YOU CAN DO YOUR PART TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT WITHOUT EVER LEAVING THE HOUSE.

Living an eco-friendly lifestyle is more important than you think. Our precious Earth is full of natural beauty and vital natural resources, and if we each do our part, we can make sure that the next generations will be able to enjoy all of this as much as we do.

Right now, we have a serious pollution problem. We're consuming a vast quantity of fossil fuels, which produce noxious gasses when burned. We're filling our lands with trash and industrial waste, putting wildlife at great risk. We're cutting down forests faster than they can spring up.

And that's just a few of the ways our world is currently in danger.

Fortunately, going green is easy, and you can often save money as you embrace a more efficient, waste-free way of life. Environmentalism doesn't have to be difficult or expensive, and you don't have to go without your normal comforts. To do your part, all you have to do is make a few simple changes.



The best part? You can make these changes from the comfort of your own home, and become an eco-hero without ever changing out of your pajamas.

Source: www.beliefnet.com

Tend to the Thermostat

Switch Out Old Bulbs

Insulate the Water Heater

Manage Your Fridge

Go All Electronic

Slay Your Energy Vampires

Recycle

Care for the Earth



GRIEF continued from page 1

luxury of time required to achieve this final stage of grief.

The death of your loved one might inspire you to evaluate your own feelings of mortality. Throughout each stage, a common thread of hope emerges:

As long as there is life, there is hope. As long as there is hope, there is life.

Many people do not experience the stages of grief in order, which is perfectly okay and normal. The key to understanding the stages is not to feel like you must go through every one of them, in precise order. Instead, it's more helpful to look at them as guides in the grieving process—it helps you understand and put into context where you are.

Please keep in mind that everyone grieves differently. Some people will wear their emotions on their sleeve and be outwardly emotional. Others will experience their grief more internally, and may not cry. You should try and not judge how a person experiences their grief, as each person will experience it differently.

Source: psychcentral.com

PLUMS continued from page 2

potassium content present in dried plums, encourage the formation of bones, improve bone density, and prevent bone loss caused by ovarian hormone deficiency. Research has demonstrated that regular consumption of dried plums helps in the restoration of bone density that has already been lost due to aging.

AID IN DIGESTION

Plums are a good source of dietary fiber, along with the components sorbitol and isatin, which help in regulating the digestive system. According to research, dried plums or prunes are more effective in treating digestive disorders such as constipation as compared to other remedies such as psyllium husk. Sorbitol and isatin have a laxative effect and encourage the secretion of fluids in the bowels and promote the efficient flushing of waste through the colon.

IMPROVE COGNITION

Studies have shown that the flavonoids present in plum juice are effective in providing protection against age-related cognitive impairment. The beneficial phytonutrients present in plums help in reducing inflammation in the neurological areas to improve learning and memory functions. Regular consumption of plums also helps in preventing age-related neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

MAINTAIN HEALTHY NERVOUS SYSTEM

Plums contain vitamin B6, which helps in the transmission of nerve signals and aids in the smooth functioning of the nervous system. They also help in the normal growth of the brain and assist in the formation of mood influencing hormones. Tryptophan, an amino acid present in plums, helps in the production of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which plays an important role in improving sleep, appetite and concentration.

PROTECT HEART HEALTH

Research has provided supporting evidence that the regular intake of dried plums helps in promoting fluidity of blood in the arteries. This protective effect aids in the prevention of various cardiac disorders, including the development of atherosclerosis and the reduction in chances for heart attack and stroke.

BOOST IMMUNITY

Plums are beneficial in strengthening the immune defense of the body due to the presence of high vitamin C content. This vitamin promotes the body's resistance against infections and inflammation. Research has shown that oriental plums have immunostimulatory constituents that encourage the production of nitric oxide in the body, impede the metastasis of tumor cells, and are valuable in



preventing various diseases.

REGULATE CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

Dried plums or prunes help in preventing hypercholesterolemia and hyperlipidemia. A comparative study has proven the efficacy of prunes over grape-juice in maintaining healthy levels of plasma and liver cholesterol. The fiber content present in them also adds to the protective effect of the heart by reducing LDL (bad) cholesterol and helping to elevate the levels of HDL (good) cholesterol.

WEIGHT LOSS

Research conducted by the University of Liverpool suggests that intake of prunes as part of a weight control diet can speed up weight loss.

BOOST CELLULAR HEALTH

Plums contain essential minerals like iron and copper, which assist in the formation of red blood cells and facilitate blood purification and healthy circulation. The copper in plums acts as an antioxidant, and is essential for nerve health and aids in the formation of collagen. Consumption of copper also helps in the absorption of iron and prevents various diseases like anemia and osteoarthritis.

ELIMINATE ANXIETY

Regular consumption of plums helps in reducing anxiety. Studies have provided supporting evidence regarding the anxiolytic effects and antioxidant properties of chlorogenic acids present in plums, which help in curing anxiety-related behaviors and damage caused by oxidative stress.

CURE INFLUENZA

Japanese plums are effective against the infection caused by the influenza A virus. Studies have shown that concentrated juice of Japanese plums contains lectin-like molecules which help in inhibiting and treating the

How To Select & Store Plums?



Select plums with a slight whitish bloom, which indicates no over-handling.

Avoid the soft ones with bruises.

Ripe and ready-to-eat plums yield to slight pressure and have a sweet aroma.

Plums can be stored in the refrigerator.

Slightly firm plums can be kept in a paper bag at room temperature until they ripen. Prunes can be kept at room temperature for a few days.

infections caused by human influenza A virus.

USEFUL IN PREGNANCY

Plum products are beneficial during pregnancy, due to the abundance of numerous vitamins and minerals. These beneficial components are vital for eye-sight, development of bones and tissues, and cellular health for the mother and the growing baby. The fiber content aids in preventing constipation and improves digestion. The inclusion of plums as a part of balanced diet helps in fighting various infections and maintains overall health. However, one should be careful regarding the choice of commercially available plum juices as they might contain high amounts of sugar.

PREVENT CANCER

Plum extracts have been proven beneficial in the treatment of cancer. Studies have shown that the component epicatechin, present in plums, helps in inhibiting the growth and proliferation of malignant cancer cells and induces apoptosis in human hepatocellular carcinoma or liver cancer. They are rich in antioxidants and phytonutrients, including chlorogenic and neo-chlorogenic acid which have a curative effect on breast cancer cells, without harming the healthy cells of the body.

MAINTAIN ELECTROLYTE BALANCE

Plums contain potassium, which is an electrolyte and is

required for the efficient functioning of cells and tissues of the body. Consuming potassium-rich plums helps in regulating muscle contractions and acid-base balance of the body.

SKIN CARE

Plums are rich in vitamin C, along with other antioxidants, which help to maintain healthy, radiant, and youthful skin. The consumption of plums helps in reducing dark spots and wrinkles due to the presence of anti-aging nutrients. Plum extracts are used in various skin care products such as face wash and face packs.

PREVENT MACULAR DEGENERATION

Plums contain vitamin A and beta-carotene, which are beneficial in maintaining healthy eyesight and preventing age-related macular degeneration. The carotenoids, lutein and zeaxanthin, present in them reside in the macular tissues of the retina and provide protection against the damage caused by UV radiation.

PREVENT BLOOD CLOTTING

Plums and prunes contain vitamin K, which helps in normal clotting of the blood and promotes bone health. Deficiency of vitamin K in the body can result in excessive blood loss and other health concerns such as weak bones.

CULINARY USE

Plums are widely used in food items due to their sweet and tart flavor, as well as their pleasant aroma. They can be enjoyed fresh and can also be added to puddings, jams and jellies. Plum juice is used in the preparation of alcoholic beverages. Prune juice concentrate works deliciously well as a filling for candies and confectionery products, and as a binding agent for cereal bars. Plum chutney or dip is famous in Indian cuisine and is served along with stuffed Indian bread. It is also relished as a condiment along with meat delicacies.

OTHER USES

Plum blossoms have been historically used in the treatment of loose teeth, mouth ulcers and sore gums. They are an effective ingredient in the manufacturing of mouthwashes and help in curing bad breath and soothing sore throats.

Source: organicfacts.net

How I Remember Naji...

FEELINGS

I read that feelings drive our emotions. Neuroscience has discovered that emotions and thoughts are linked. If reason and emotion conflict, emotion always wins. This happens because despite a desire to appear rational, feelings drive our choices. Even when we are being rational, we cannot escape how we feel. Emotions and thoughts are linked.

Thoughts become words.
Words become actions.
Actions become habits.
Habits become character.
And character shapes destiny.

While reading *The Prophet* by Khalil Gibran, I learned something about love and marriage. From his words I understood that love is not crazy glue that brings people together. People need their own space.

For example, a cedar and a maple tree cannot grow in each other's shadow. The strings on a guitar are separated, but together they create beautiful harmony. So can two people.

Two individuals cannot become one person. They can fill each other's cup but they don't need to drink from the same cup. They can give each other a piece of bread, but they don't need to share the same one.

Think about the pillars in a temple. The columns support the temple even though they are far apart. This is the possibility for love between two people. Love can be like an ocean between them, not necessarily a glue that binds

them together. Feeling is the language of the soul.

DECISION MAKING

The best decision to make is the right decision, and the worst decision to make is to be undecided. Essentially this means that we need to make a decision, be responsible, be accountable and deal with it on the spot. It's difficult to function when we're undecided, hesitant or confused.

In the past I learned "don't get mad, get even." Recent experience has taught me, "don't get even, just go ahead and forgive."

When I watch someone do something good, I say to myself, I can do that. In reality it isn't done until I do it.

First I learn, then I understand and finally I memorize. Making decisions requires stability in the thought process. If I am good for myself, then I am good for others. I stand accountable for my own life.

EXCERPT FROM NAJI'S BOOK, *LITTLE BOOK OF INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS AND WRITINGS*.



People Are Born To Shine!

People are Born To Shine is a bi-monthly, electronic newsletter owned by The Naji Cherfan Foundation focusing on spirituality and health. The objective of People are Born to Shine is to raise awareness among our readers on health challenges and disease prevention, while inspiring them to live a fuller, more abundant life guided by Christian values. This newsletter is dedicated to people of all ages, those who are healthy and those with health problems and those with brain injury of any kind, resulting from accident, stroke, etc.

The content has been carefully selected from internet sources considered reliable and accurate to bring you good news of health and spiritual well being, however The Naji Cherfan Foundation assumes no responsibility for inaccurate information. The NCF would like to recognize the devoted work of its volunteers, mainly Marianne Debs, Me. Kamal Rahal, Me. Harold Alvarez, Zeina Costantine, Joyce Abou Jaoude, Rita Kassis, Marleine Nassrany, Diala Ghostine Nassrany, Dima Rbeiz, Father Joseph Abdel Sater, Father Joseph Soueid, Reine Kassis, Nabil Khoury, Roland Khoury, Father Elia Chalhoub, Valéria de Proença, Athena and Christina Georgotas, Violette Nakhle, and all the field volunteers who are supporting NCF in spreading the words of Jesus through their institutions, churches, hospitals, establishments, etc.

This issue is available in Arabic, English, Greek, Dutch, French, Spanish and Portuguese. The NCF management and staff are very grateful for the efforts of the Chief Editors who are volunteering to translate and edit the Newsletter into several languages namely, Isabelle Boghossian for the Greek language, Cristina Butler for the Portuguese language, Rita Abou Jaoude & Myriam Salibi for the French language, Professor Lydia & Ambassador Alejandro Diaz for the Spanish language, Roly Lakeman for the Dutch language, Rita Abou Jaoude & Lina Rizkallah for the Arabic language.

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