

What to Do When Time Isn't Healing Your Wounds

By Kris Vallotton

Is it possible to walk through pain and come out the other side really okay? Yes. Is it easy? No. Is it worth it? Most definitely. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4). In other words, mourning is necessary; it's the process that leads to wholeness. Yet many Christians are afraid of pain and believe their only responsibilities are to cheer people up. Consequently, hurting people push down their pain instead of confronting it. This leads to a life of unresolved agony. As children of God, we must learn how to walk away from pain (not hide it), so that we can become healthy and whole people who live joyful lives. So let's take a look at some practical steps for walking away from pain.

1. Forgive those who caused you pain.

Forgiveness shuts out bondage and frees you to begin living in peace. There are a few things that you should know about forgiveness. First of all, forgiveness is an act of your will, not a manifestation of your desire. In other words, forgiveness doesn't have to feel good. Second, forgiving someone doesn't preclude you from experiencing pain when he or she is around, and it doesn't mean you have to trust them. Forgiveness simply means you no longer will the person to be punished.

2. Change the way you think about pain.

One of the greatest misconceptions people have about pain is that time heals. This couldn't be further from the truth! If time healed, people in prison would be the most whole people in the world. Over the course of many trials and tribulations, I have learned the value of finding joy in the process of my pain and of looking forward to the outcome. Joy—or the promise of joy—gives you the ability to face seemingly impossible circumstances and helps you to thrive when life is hard. It's critical that you change the way you think about trials, pain, and perseverance, so that the joy of the Lord will become your strength in the tough seasons of your life.

3. Allow yourself to mourn.

Contrary to popular opinion, mourning isn't sitting in a dark room thinking about your agony until you become angry and overwhelmed. This may be a part of your process, but it certainly isn't the endgame. The process of mourning that leads to wholeness has a beginning and an end. As you would at a funeral, you experience grief as you recount the loss, yet tears tend to wash away your pain as you process your memories and recount your history. Allow the mourning process to run its course and lead you into wholeness.

4. Examine your troubled thoughts.

Sometimes during the process of walking out of pain, you become so distressed that your thoughts are like troubled children arguing with their siblings. The noise and confusion can be so dramatic that it is nearly impossible to concentrate on the voice of God. This often causes you to feel alone and afraid. In moments like this, it's necessary to deal with each screaming thought individually. Separate your troubled thoughts and interview them independently. This step is often the most challenging because it requires you to dig down to your root issues, but facing your pain head-on is the only way to find true resolve and, ultimately, closure.

5. Strengthen your broken places.

If you've spent your whole life shut down because you're afraid of being rejected and hurt, then I suggest you read a great book on boundaries. It also might be wise to listen to some teaching on how to communicate your feelings. Give a voice to what's going on inside of you. This is the way to become a powerful person in every area of life.

6. Pace Yourself.

Processing pain is a lot like lifting weights. If you lift weights every day, all day long, instead of getting stronger you'll break your body down to the point that it can't do anything. In the same way, if you process all day long, every day, you will have what we call an emotional breakdown. Therefore, it's essential that you pace yourself. It's also important, as you are working through emotional times or stressful seasons, that you eat healthily, sleep well, exercise often, and have fun.

IT'S WORTH IT

Regardless of the reasons you're hurting or you're numb, the way out is to dive in. By doing this, you will become a master at discovering your pain, communicating for closure, and healing your soul. It's worth going through the process so that you can be free and fully step into the great destiny on your life! Today I pray that wherever you are in your process of pain, that you would find comfort in the voice of a loving Father, pulling you into His arms and speaking strength and truth over you!