



# TAKE THE NEXT STEP

**VOLUNTEERING FOR A GRIEFSHARE GROUP**





Is this right for  
my church?

How much  
does it cost?

Do I need  
materials?

Can I do this?

Can I do this?

What do I need to  
get started?

Do I have what it  
takes to lead?

What are my  
next steps?

Am I ready to  
jump in?

### But what about ...

You probably have a few concerns and more than a few questions. Is your brain buzzing with them? That's great! This means you're right on track. As you consider this opportunity, it's natural to have these thoughts. It's why we wanted you to have this guide—to provide answers and guidance and let you know that ...

# YOU CAN DO THIS!

GriefShare was created with lay leaders like you in mind. We provide the resources you need to launch, run, and grow your group. And we'll walk with you every step of the way. The rest of this guide is designed to answer your questions and help get you started. In the following three steps, you'll learn what GriefShare is all about and how to bring it to the hurting in your community. At the end, you'll find answers to common questions people have about leading a group. Ready to learn more? Just bring your heart, and we'll show you how.



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“I have found purpose. With GriefShare, I can comfort others with the same comfort that I received.”

**Susan**, GriefShare leader





# YOU CAN MAKE AN IMPACT (YES, YOU!)

Thank you for your interest in leading a grief support group. You've just taken the first step to reaching those in need of hope and healing. This guide will help walk you through the process of getting started in volunteering through GriefShare. We know God can use your experience with loss to help others who are hurting. Your involvement in GriefShare can impact:



## Individuals

You can reach grieving people during one of the most difficult times in their lives. GriefShare offers support and hope to people when they need it most.



## Your community

Offering GriefShare draws people from your community to your church. So your group can be a catalyst for hope and healing in your area.



## Eternity

This ministry offers more than recovery from the loss of a loved one. It offers biblical hope, and instruction that invite people to become followers of Jesus Christ.

**“Lives have been changed because of GriefShare.”**

**GriefShare leader**

For over 25 years, thousands of GriefShare leaders—people just like you—have been coming alongside those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. And these leaders keep on telling us how deeply satisfying it is to see lives transformed with comfort and hope.



## CARLA'S STORY

### Leading GriefShare helps others.

One of the reasons that I became a GriefShare leader was because I wanted to come alongside other people in their loss and simply walk with them. Having walked through profound loss myself, I knew that I was uniquely equipped to relate to people who were now facing loss.

When people come to GriefShare, they are surprised by the intensity of their own emotions. But by the latter weeks, we find that people move away from being overwhelmed by their emotions and they move toward peace. It's been a blessing to be part of facilitating that process.



# WHY YOU?

## Not sure that you're qualified to lead GriefShare?

If you're reading this guide, you clearly have a heart for those hurting from loss. This is the most essential quality you have to offer.

Think about where your compassion comes from. It probably grows from a personal experience with the loss of a loved one, right? Your firsthand encounter with grief has equipped you for this ministry. You are perfectly suited for this task.

With that foundation, you have everything you need to volunteer for a GriefShare ministry at your church.

**"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ... who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God." 2 Cor. 1:3-4**

## SUCCESSFUL LEADERS HAVE:

### A HEART TO HELP OTHERS

You understand what grieving people are going through. Your heart aches for those who have lost a loved one. You want to help ease their pain.

You want God to use you to serve others, and you are willing to commit a few hours each week to minister to those who are hurting.

### WILLINGNESS TO SERVE

**If you have those two desires, we can help you lead a successful GriefShare program.**

**"Leading GriefShare requires no formal training—just a compassionate heart."**

**GriefShare leader**



# 3

# SIMPLE STEPS



## STEP 1

# GET INFORMATION

Your first step is to learn more about this ministry. If you're considering volunteering for a GriefShare group at your church, this page gives you an overview of the program and what it entails.

## WHAT IS GRIEFSHARE?

GriefShare is a 13-week, Christ-centered support group hosted at local churches by leaders just like you. Through video teaching and small-group discussions, the group helps grieving people find comfort, healing, and hope.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO LEAD A GROUP?

### Leader's guide

No need to write a lesson plan—just pull out a weekly agenda and follow along! The discussion questions we provide will jump-start the sharing time and keep it on track.

### Participant guide

Your group members will find personal help between weekly meetings. You won't need to be a Bible expert, because the Scriptures in this book are perfectly suited for people hurting from bereavement.

You can offer your group in person, online, or a combination of both. Your kit comes with digital access to the videos.

### Reflections journal

This guided journal is a companion resource for your group members. Use the sample in your kit to show your group and encourage them in further healing.

### Video sessions

You don't need to teach or "know all the answers." The pastors and counselors on the videos provide the teaching.

### Promotional materials

We help you get the word out about your group: You'll have access to promo videos, fully designed ads and flyers, free online registration tools, and more.







# WHAT DO GROUP LEADERS DO?

As a GriefShare leader, your main responsibilities will be to:

## Build a team

You shouldn't lead your support group alone! It's better to build a team of people to help you run your group.

## Promote your ministry

Most people in your community won't hear your weekly church announcements, so you'll need to actively promote your group—inside and outside of your church. When you host a group, you'll have access to free promo materials (flyers, social media ads, videos, etc.) that you can use.

## Host a group

Hosting a GriefShare group involves two basic activities:



### Video seminar

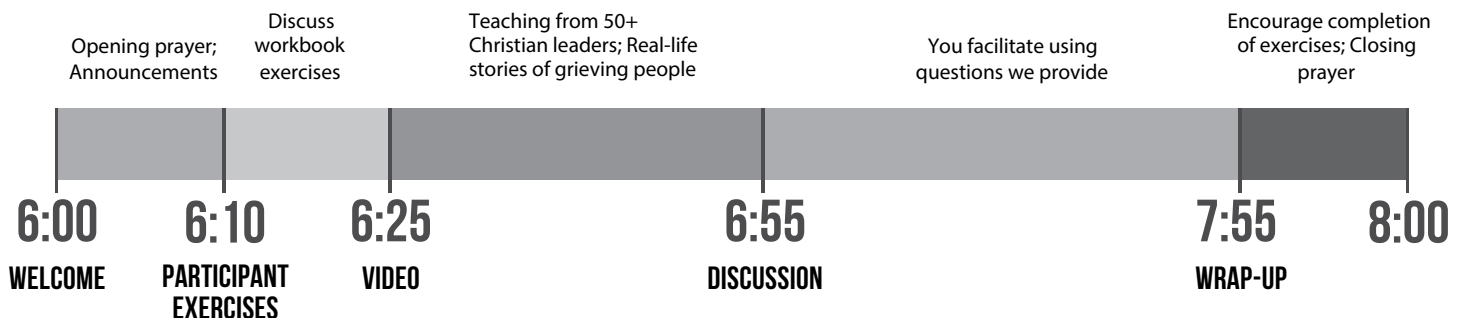
Each week you'll show a 30-minute GriefShare video to your group. The videos (on DVD and online) feature respected Christian counselors and pastors who will "teach" your group. So you don't have to be an expert.



### Small-group discussion

Discussion questions are provided in each leader's guide. You simply facilitate the small-group sharing time.

# TYPICAL MEETING



Visit [griefshare.org](https://griefshare.org) for more information about GriefShare!

"The GriefShare materials are clear.  
They're relevant. They're biblically based."

**Bill Curl**  
Pastor



## STEP 2

# GET SUPPORT

Have more questions or concerns? We thought so. And that's why we have a team of GriefShare coaches standing by to guide and assist. Best of all, there's no charge (ever) to speak with a GriefShare coach.



## CONTACT A COACH

Once you understand the basics of GriefShare, the next step is to talk to a GriefShare coach. A coach will help you launch a successful group—and help you make sure it stays strong. Many of our coaches have experienced grief themselves and now find joy in helping people through GriefShare. They'd love to talk to you.

## WHAT DOES A COACH OFFER?

### VISION

Your GriefShare coaches can help you understand how God can use you through this ministry. They'll help you see how you've grown in compassion and other areas as a result of your personal loss experience. And they'll explain how GriefShare can help you use what you've learned to help others in your community who are grieving the death of a loved one.

### SUPPORT

Do you have questions about what to do next or how to get started? Want advice from someone with experience? Need encouragement through the process? GriefShare coaches are ready to talk to you.

Perhaps you still have some doubts about making a commitment to lead. (This is normal!) Our ministry coaches can be a sounding board for you through that decision-making process. They've worked with thousands of leaders, and they can help you figure out if you're ready and give you confidence to take the next step.

**Make an appointment to talk with a coach. It's free!**



# WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

To take advantage of our free coaching, call 800-395-5755 or email a ministry coach any time. There's no commitment required. Our coaches are available to current, future, and potential leaders (even those who are just thinking about it). Coaches are available Monday–Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. eastern time.

## MEET OUR COACHES



### PATI

Pati is the Director of Ministry Coaching. Since she joined the staff in 2015, her organization skills, knowledge, and kind heart have been apparent as she guides churches and leaders in how to host our support group programs.



### HEIDI

Heidi is a ministry coach passionate about helping churches start and grow support groups. She guides leaders with encouragement and practical tools, supporting them as they navigate challenges and celebrate their ministries.



### KIM

Kim connects with pastors, church staff, and lay leaders to offer help and suggestions for their support group ministries. Her involvement in grief and care ministry started in 1997.



### HOLLY

Holly has led ministries for many years and finds great joy in equipping volunteers and leaders. She encourages and supports them with wisdom, compassion, and practical insight to help their ministries thrive.



### STEPHANIE

Stephanie has led support groups since 2006. She enjoys guiding leadership teams through the process of launching and maintaining an effective and long-lasting ministry program.



### CAMILLE

Camille helps churches hosting a support group ministry, and guides leaders in building a ministry team and navigating the many resources available. She is the ministry's bilingual coach helping groups in Spanish and English.

## MORE RESOURCES

Your coach isn't the only help we offer. If you decide to lead a group, we'll introduce you to our online GriefShare LeaderZone.

The LeaderZone website gives you access to:

- Online videos for virtual groups
- Group management tools
- Leader training
- Online discussion forum
- Promo materials
- Articles on leading well
- And much, much more

### The GriefShare Online Forum:

With this email forum, you can connect with other leaders involved with GriefShare ministry, asking questions and sharing advice and experiences.

With your coach by your side and the GriefShare LeaderZone at your fingertips, you'll never be alone in your GriefShare journey.

## WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!



CALL A MINISTRY COACH  
**800-395-5755**



EMAIL A MINISTRY COACH  
**info@griefshare.org**

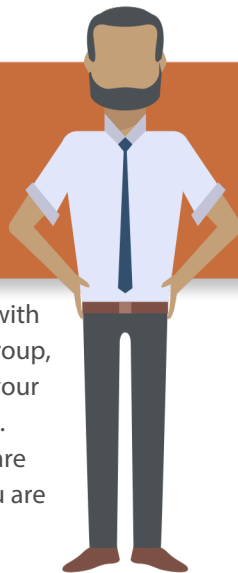
## STEP 3

# GET APPROVAL

Before starting a ministry at your church, you'll want to be sure you have your church's support and approval. Nervous? Don't be. Most pastors are thrilled when church members take the lead to meet specific needs in the church and community.

## MEET WITH YOUR PASTOR

Your pastor may or may not be familiar with GriefShare. So, if you want to launch a group, your next step should be to speak with your pastor about this ministry opportunity. You'll want to schedule a meeting to share what GriefShare is all about and why you are excited to offer it in your church.



## EMAILING

Start by **emailing the pastor** who oversees care ministries to set up this meeting. (Don't try to pitch a new ministry idea during a busy Sunday morning service!) Thirty minutes is plenty of time to properly present everything your pastor needs to know.

## SAMPLE EMAIL

Here's an email template you can use:

Dear Pastor (Name),

I'd like to schedule a meeting with you to discuss a potential new ministry for our church called GriefShare. It's a biblically based, lay-led support group program to help people grieving the death of a loved one.

This is a topic that is dear to my heart, and I am excited about the potential GriefShare has to impact both our congregation and the community.

During our meeting, I'll outline the basics of the ministry and how I could help implement it at (Your Church Name). Is there a day next week we could meet for 30 minutes?

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and consider this opportunity.

In Christ,  
(Your Name)





# RESOURCES FOR THE MEETING

Need more resources? We've got 'em. Use these tools to prepare for your meeting with your pastor.

## PROMO VIDEO

Share this **video** with your pastor to view before your meeting. It provides a 90-second overview of the ministry.



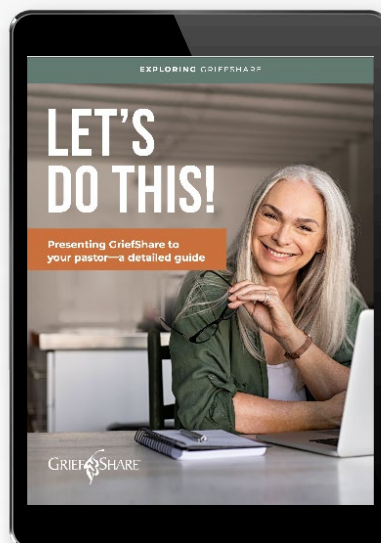
## WEBSITE

Show your pastor the **GriefShare website** pages on how to host a group.



## MEETING GUIDE

Download this **detailed agenda** to help you plan what to say during the meeting.



Feel free to use these resources to help your pastor understand GriefShare's potential at your church. You could send links to your pastor before or after the meeting.

Remember, if you have questions about what to do, you can always call a coach for help.

# STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Here are some of the most common questions people have before they start a GriefShare group.

## Q. I'm not a counselor. What if I don't have all the answers?

You aren't supposed to. As a group leader, your role is not to give counseling advice or be a teacher. The videos will help answer many questions, and, if anything comes up outside of this information, it's okay to say you don't know the answer but you'll find it. Then after the meeting, you can call a GriefShare coach or talk to one of the leaders in your church to help you with a response.

## Q. Will I have to prepare curriculum or materials?

Not at all! Everything is provided for you. Each participant receives a workbook, and all discussion questions are included in your [ministry kit](#). Each kit includes videos, a leader's guide with agendas and discussion questions, training guides, promo tools, and access to additional resources.

## Q. Will there be enough interest for this ministry in my church?

If you're only thinking about how GriefShare can help people in your church, think bigger. There are many people in your community who are hurting from the pain of grief and loss. And GriefShare is a wonderful way to reach them. Plus, it's likely that nearly everyone in your church has experienced the death of a loved one at some point. If you make the ministry available, it's likely you'll find many who are grateful for the opportunity to be involved with GriefShare.

## Q. Does it cost anything to start a GriefShare group?

Your church will need to purchase [GriefShare ministry kit](#), which has everything you need to start the ministry, including the videos, participant workbooks, and additional resources. Kits are available in three sizes (based on participant numbers) and start at \$395. Many groups charge participants a fee of \$20 to \$25 to cover the costs of their workbooks, refreshments, and other expenses. Many churches also maintain a scholarship fund for those unable to afford the fee.

## Q. What time commitment do I need to run this ministry?

Of course, this varies from group to group, but you can expect to devote 2 hours each week to facilitating meetings for the 13-week program. Then factor in an additional hour or so for ongoing promotion for future groups and support for the current group.

## Q. Could I offer a group online?

Yes. Each GriefShare kit comes with access to online materials so you can offer a group online, in person, or a combination of both.



# A MESSAGE FROM YOUR COACH

Hi there! At this point either you're ready to take the next step to launch your group or you still have a few more questions. And wherever you're at, we're here to help. To determine how best to support you, I'd like you to answer this question:

## ARE YOU READY TO GET STARTED?

**YES**

You are excited about this ministry opportunity and would like to take the next step to bring GriefShare to your church.

**NO**

You have a few questions and concerns you need to address before you'll feel ready to move forward with this ministry.

## CALL A COACH

**800-395-5755**

I'm excited for you and would love to help you get started! You can reach out to our GriefShare coach team right away for guidance and support as you begin this new ministry.

I understand completely. And I would be happy to walk you through your questions and concerns. Our GriefShare coach team exists for this purpose! Let talk about how we can help.



Wherever you are on your GriefShare journey, our coaches have walked there before and would love to come alongside you. A quick connection with a GriefShare coach will provide the support you need to determine your next best step. I don't want you to miss this free, no-obligation support that has helped thousands of others just like you. We hope to hear from you soon!

**Pati Baker**, *Ministry Coach Director*



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**800-395-5755**



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