



## The pain of loss

The loss of a loved one through separation, divorce, or death is one of life's most traumatic experiences. It can result in nearly unbearable feelings of loneliness and grief.

Many people who have suffered this loss feel left out by their church, uneasy around married friends, unsure of themselves and uncertain about their futures.

## Hope for a new beginning

The *Beginning Experience* weekend program helps grieving single-again persons emerge from the darkness of grief into the light of a new beginning, and move into the future with renewed hope. The program helps deal with the natural grief process and offers an opportunity, through God, for turning the pain of loss into an experience of positive growth.

Founded by a Catholic nun and rooted in the Christian tradition, the ministry's open, ecumenical spirit serves those of all faiths.

## Experience of community

From Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, the *Beginning Experience* program is presented by a team of people who have suffered the loss of a loved one and are willing to share their own experience to help others.

Team members lead participants through a program of presentations, personal private reflection, and small group sharing. A sense of community develops in an atmosphere of care and concern that is a hallmark of each *Beginning Experience* weekend.

## Who should attend

The *Beginning Experience* weekend is designed to be a time of closure on the past and renewed hope for the future. Those who come should be beyond the initial feelings of anger and despair which usually follow the loss of a loved one. They should be at the point of wanting a new beginning and ready to work to make that desire a reality.

Once the application for the weekend is received, someone is available to help each person determine his or her readiness for the program.

## What participants say

*"I was nervous about going to the Beginning Experience, but I'm glad I did. I feel more alive than I have in years."*

*"...my first step out of grief and self pity. I took a fresh look at the choices I have now to make my life a good one."*

*"I found people all around who accepted me without judgment and cared for me."*

*"It was a time just for me, to explore where I've been in my life and where I'm going."*

*"I have so much more energy now for my children and my job."*

*"...worth every dollar and many more. It was the best gift I ever gave myself."*

## The results

Those who've attended the weekend program report:

- Increased emotional health and self respect
- New skills to deal with the pain of loss
- Healthier family relationships
- Renewed energy to be more effective parents, return to their church, and improve the standard of living for themselves and their families.

## The invitation

Whether you choose to attend the *Beginning Experience* weekend only, or in addition to other support for the single again, the program's invitational process offers the opportunity to move towards a new beginning in life. Its quality and effectiveness are well documented.

- Developed by respected professionals in grief psychology, ministry, education and organizational process, the program is both psychologically and spiritually sound.
- The ministry has been honored by the North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics and the National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers, participated in the International Conference for the World Federation for Mental Health in Ireland, and addressed the Australian government's Year of the Family Congress.
- To ensure the integrity of the copyrighted program, the Beginning Experience International Ministry Center periodically certifies 120 peer ministry teams worldwide to present the program.

**BEGINNING EXPERIENCE®**  
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