

Helping Parents Heal Support Group

Objective

Assist parents who have been alienated by their adolescent/adult children by offering insight, empathy and perspective when they have lost the opportunity to be the parent they desperately want to be and who are mourning the loss of a harmonious relationship with their child by:

- Reducing anger, guilt and shame;
- Learn how temperament, the teen years, their own or partner's mistakes, and divorce can strain the parent-child bond;
- Come to terms with their own and their child's imperfections;
- Strategies for rebuilding the relationship or move toward acceptance of what cannot be changed.

The Essential Principles for Healing

The Helping Parents Heal Support Group promotes the following:

- Develop compassion for ourselves
- Move anger, guilt, shame and regret into the background of our lives and move hope, gratitude, and optimism into the foreground.
- Develop an identity and life story based on our strengths and achievements as parents and individuals, instead of a story about our pain or failures.
- Develop compassion for our child or children.
- Move toward forgiving our child for how he or she hurt us in the past or in the present (this doesn't mean condoning or excusing bad behaviour, or minimizing our hurt)
- Fearlessly take responsibility for whatever ways that we have contributed to the problems in our relationship with our child or our children
- Make amends for the ways that we were wrong
- Move toward forgiving ourselves for our mistakes as parents.
- Get and maintain support from friends, family, or our faith.
- Give something back to society.

Program Materials:

- **Book-** Dr. Joshua Coleman, *When Parents Hurt*, Harper-Collins Publishers:2008.
- **DVD** - selected presentations by Dr. J. Coleman.
- **Leaders Guide** – *Helping Parents Heal*
- **Participant Handouts**

Participant handouts will be provided.

Program Outline:

Week 1: Getting to Know Each Other

Week 2: Starting to Heal

Week 3: Handling Blame and Criticism

Week 4: Understanding the Problem

Week 5: Understanding Your child and Dealing with Shame

Week 6: Reaching Out, Making Amends

Week 7: Working on Forgiving Yourself, Forgiving Your Child

Week 8: Handling Requests for Gifts and Money

Week 9: Divorce Wounds*

Week 10: Moving Past Anger

*An alternate topic may be presented this week if participants are not experiencing estrangement as result of divorce.

Guide for *Helping Parents Heal Support Group*:

The Helping Parents Heal Support Group

- Has a maximum of 10 participants due to the nature of the sharing and professional care that is being offered.
- Promote a code of ethics exercising confidentiality and care for one another.
- Will meet for a ten-week period on Thursday from 6:30-8:30 pm Sept 29-Dec 1/11.

Group Facilitator

- Is a professional counsellor, certified in good standing with professional body and holds professional liability insurance.
- Offers instruction, guidance and interventions with individuals and the group as a whole to assist in personal healing.
- Offers time-tested principles to promote healing and personal growth from the emotional wounds caused by strained relationships.

Participants:

- Respond to advertizing through the community and local media by making application to participate in the group.
- Will have a personal desire to work toward the restoration of the relationship they have lost with their adolescent/adult child.
- Will be interviewed by the Group facilitator to determine whether or not the group is suitable for their situation and needs.
- Because the facilitator is offering professional service, participants will agree to pay for their participation on a sliding scale. The fee will be discussed with each participant with understanding of personal need and financial means to pay for service. No person will be refused for financial reasons but it must be recognized the facilitator is assuming all costs.
- Will apply their signature to a Statement of Understanding for the *Helping Parents Heal Support Group* outlining the guidelines presented in this proposal document.

Fee Structure: \$200 per person/10 week session plus workbook cost. The purchase of the book "When Parents Hurt" by Dr. J. Coleman is optional.