

Yesterday (18Sept84), early in the morning, our grandson Matthew, age 2, came into my study and said "Where Moma?" "Gone on airplane," I said. "Where Daddy?" "Back soon," I said. And he did something rare for him: he cried. I did what I could to comfort him, but he was inconsolable....Almost from birth we humans experience separation, loss, grief, bereavement, and the constellations of feelings and ideas pertaining thereto. This thinksheet looks toward group conversation on convictions we've had/have/hope to have bearing on this realm of living. In writing your responses, do so with COURAGE (which is hard) and with HONESTY (which is almost impossible). Use both sides of this sheet, carrying over your response where necessary.

1 Cynic Bertrand Russell said, "Every man, wherever he goes, is encompassed by a cloud of comforting convictions which move with him like flies on a summer day." What comforting convictions do you now have vis-a-vis grief and bereavement?

2 What comforting convictions did you have that you no longer have?

3 What comforting convictions do you wish you had because you've seen others sustained by them?

4 In all your life, what's been the hardest grief-bereavement to take?

5 In your direct experience, who comes to mind as having been an outstanding example of "taking it" in grief-bereavement with courage, peace, and joy?

6 What's the first thing you'd say the first time you see someone after that person has come to grief-bereavement?