

TRY IT ON

WHAT FITS MY GRIEF?

The Grieving of Jairus' Community

Some features to help you determine if you want to **TRY ON** the grief because the circumstances are similar to your own:

- Unexpected terminal illness
- Swiftly approaching death
- Urgency of alternative options
- Delayed aid and absence of urgency in others
- Futility of efforts to help
- Death of a child

Some feelings to help you determine if you want to **TRY ON** the grief because the emotions are similar to your own:

- Urgency
- Desperation
- Sadness
- Pleading
- Shock
- Disappointment

A summary about what happened.

With his only daughter dying from illness, Jairus knew he needed help. As a leader of worship, he was tasked with helping the community ask for God's help, but this time he needed help. As his community waited, Jairus sought out someone who could help. Pushing through the crowds, Jairus fell to the ground at the feet of a traveling healer, Jesus, and begged for help. Jairus declared faith that this healer could help his daughter and pleaded fervently for swift intervention. After convincing the healer to come, there was a delay when the healer suddenly stopped. Everyone waited as the healer asked the person who touched him to disclose why. Everyone waited as the healer held a conversation with a woman who explained what happened. Everyone waited ... too ... long. The waiting community sent Jairus the news that his daughter had died. They told him to stop troubling Jesus, and they began mourning. They wept with tears. They wailed with cries. They lamented with pipe music.



Some of the actions of Jairus' community that you can **TRY ON** to see if any fit you well:

- **Lay low** - Sometimes your presence on the ground can indicate to God and others how low you are feeling. Sometimes there are no words to capture grief. Grief is guttural. Physically connecting to the ground or other solid things can help the body recognize where it is in space, which can be calming.
- **Beg for help** - Begging is often viewed as a negative response. However the act of begging is important when those with power to help do not seem to take our needs seriously. Call repeatedly until an authority gives a response. Ask someone who previously said no to reconsider because a continual act of begging can get through.
- **Wait together** - Just as Jairus did not leave his wife and daughter to wait alone, have others join you. Send a request to community members. Invite them to wait with your family. Find ways to communicate with lots of people at once, like through a church or media outlet. Others can provide distractions or support. Others can keep you from making rash decisions.
- **Inform family** - It can be an act of kindness to family members and yourself to let others know about your grief. Sharing information, especially regarding bad news, can ease the burden by sharing the load. Consider asking someone who is not a close family member to help you inform the necessary people. It can also be helpful to prepare one message that can be used for multiple groups of people.
- **Lament with music** - Music that matches our moods can be soothing and even medicinal. Find an instrument that can give voice or sound to your feelings can help you process and communicate how you are grieving.

Some of the phrases of Jairus' community that you can **TRY ON** to see if any feel right for you:

- Please come to us.
- This person needs your touch, Lord.
- Bring healing and life.
- Even though this person is dead, God can still help.
- Help this person live again.

Some ideas you can **TRY ON** with a child:

- **Craft a notify list** - Ask your child who the child would like to notify about the illness or death. How would the child like to phrase or illustrate the notification? Send the notification together.
- **Make a public announcement** - Invite your child to help you share about your family's needs or allow a friend to share on your behalf. You might talk to a radio station, a business, or share on social media about the needs your family has. Invite your child to read what you plan to share and make edits or suggestions. Allow your child to have input on what is shared and how can give dignity to the child's part of the story. You might take some items with you to share with your announcement. Some ideas include:
 - Photos
 - Favorites
 - Memories
 - Writings
 - Recordings
- **Wait, wait, wait** - Inform your child about the times of waiting that you anticipate. You might say, "We are going _____, and it's going to take a while, around _____ minutes. You might be waiting and feel bored or worried. It might not be fun to wait, but we could bring things with us to help make the waiting feel better. What would you like to bring with you when we have to wait?" Some ideas could include:
 - A friend
 - Books
 - Games
 - Art
 - Toys
 - Activities
 - New items
 - Items not used in a while
- **Make a playlist** - Work on making a music playlist together in order to allow the feelings of the child to be expressed through music. What type of instrument would the child like to have in the playlist? Perhaps the child would like to offer musical accompaniment to some of the songs or make an instrument to join the music. Some ideas include:
 - Percussion (something to hit, some tool to hit with)
 - Strings (an amplifier with an opening, a way to attach strings over the opening)
 - Wind (a pipe or container to channel the sound of blowing)
 - Keys (ways to push and release so that sound is produced)

- **Wait together** - When you know that you will have a long wait, like at a hospital visitation or funeral viewing or receiving line, invite a friend to come and spend time with your child. Ask someone who can help and play with your child and provide appropriate activities for your child to do.

A summary of what happens next:

When Jairus and the healer, Jesus, finally arrived, the community was lamenting. Strangely Jesus told them to stop mourning. Once again everyone waited as Jesus went into the house only with her parents and a few disciples. Jesus took the daughter's hand and told her to rise. She got up and was no longer sick. Everyone was overwhelmed when they saw that she was alive again.

Where to find the Grieving of Jairus' community:

Matthew 9, Mark 5, Luke 8