



Study Guide for Groups
Episode 10: Survivors
Topic: Survivors of Suicide

Listen to our interview with Dr. Kay Jamison, Clinical Psychologist and Director of the Mood Disorder Center at Johns Hopkins University. Then use the following questions to guide your discussion. Many of us have been touched by suicide, so it will be important to be sensitive to any in your group who are survivors of the suicide of a loved one themselves.

- What are your reactions to Kay's interview? How did hearing Kay talk about her experience with mood disorders and suicide affect you? What specific parts of her interview did you find most interesting?
- According to most research, nearly 50% of us have lost someone we've known or a family member to suicide. If you feel comfortable, share your own experience of loss. What was that like for you and how did you make it through? How have you found healing?
- Many people who attempt or complete suicide deal with depression, bipolar disorder, or other mood disorders. Besides a diagnosis or symptoms of one of these mood disorders, if someone you knew was considering suicide, how would you know? Discuss some of the possible "warning signs" of suicide and how you might respond to a person displaying those behaviors. What are some ways you can make yourself more available to someone who might be considering suicide that would make them feel like they could talk to you?
- Kay suggests that if you read suicide notes, it almost never is about how anyone close to them could have done anything different, but it's that they cannot get beyond their own pain. Why do you think it's so hard for survivors not to blame themselves? Have you ever felt guilty for something that wasn't your fault? If so, how did you find healing?

Listen to this week's "Frog Hollow" segment of the program about guilt with Sam Heatwole. Then, discuss the following questions.

- Sam read that, "Guilt may push on the conscience, but it doesn't do much to point to the reality of God." What are your thoughts about this statement?
- Sometimes people talk about faith in a way that tries to "guilt" people into changing their lives. Has this ever happened to you? If so, what was it like for you? How do you wish that person would have acted?