



BE CLOSE: Contagious Compassion!

COME ALONG!

Senior citizens often feel isolated, many having infrequent contact with family. How can you brighten their day with compassion? Choose someone who would enjoy a scenic drive or could play a simple game with you. While you are driving or playing, ask them about favorite memories or times they have felt loved. Read the book *Come with Me* (McGhee & Lemaitre, 2017) with your younger children. What other ideas will you discover that you can do to spread compassion?



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BE CLOSE: Contagious Compassion!

SAD TO GLAD

A quick way to know you have spread compassion to someone is to watch their face. The sadness, pain or loneliness will show on their face. Notice faces together. Ask God what you could do in that moment to be compassionate to that person. As you obey God's prompts, watch their face change from sadness to relief or even a smile. As you interact with them, ask their name and pray for them. How many smiles will you influence as you show compassion to those around you?



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LOVE DIFFERENTLY: Contagious Compassion!

PRESS PAUSE

Our guest this month, Jan Johnson, shares a story of Laura--a woman who regularly sat on a bench near where Jan's family shopped. Laura asked her to "just sit on this bench and talk to me." In your daily routine, pause with your family and take time to notice someone different from you. Initiate a conversation. Ask sincere questions. Wait for their story and take time to listen. How can you be instrumental in encouraging them?



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CARING PRESENCE

Loss is hard - whether it is loss of income or a home or loss of life. And it can be difficult to know how to comfort a friend or neighbor who is grieving a loss. Ask God to direct you to someone who is suffering a loss. Without trying to fix the situation, offer the gift of your presence. Frame an encouraging Bible verse, such as Psalm 34:18 or Psalm 18:2 and take it to them. Listen to their memories of their loved one or what they will miss most in their loss. Pray with them and be sure to check back in a couple of weeks to see how they are doing.



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REACH WIDE

HOW BIG IS YOUR WORLD?

By Nancy Tichy

Chapter 11: "Life-Giving Compassion"

Cara opened her eyes and focused on the equipment attached to her right arm. From somewhere there came a beeping sound. She blinked and then realized Mom was dozing in a comfortable chair on her left. She coughed and said softly, "I'm thirsty," startling Mom awake.

"Oh, praise God! We have you back with us!" Mom exclaimed as she stood by the bed and reached for the glass of water. "Here...take a few sips." She lifted the straw to Cara's lips. Soon Dad and Jeremy joined Mom. Finally, a nurse entered the room.

"Well, this is great. Our patient is awake - finally," she said. And then she spoke directly to Cara. "How d'body, my sweet friend? You gave us quite a scare."

"This is Mercy, Cara," Mom explained. "She has taken extra shifts to be with you most of the time you've been unconscious. Something you brought with you when we adopted you from Africa...dormant all this while...suddenly attacked some vital organs and you collapsed, unconscious, three days ago."

"We've done a lot of blood tests and hope to have answers soon," Mercy explained. "In the meantime, we want to keep you here for a bit longer. You don't remember me, Cara. You were so young when you came to your new family in this country. But I knew your Auntie. We were friends even before the war." Nurse Mercy's gloved hand rested on Cara's shoulder. "Oops, sorry," she said. "I sometimes forget. You see, I lost my hand in the war. Won't go into the details."

"But you have a hand inside that glove, right?" Jeremy asked.

"Yes. A kind and clever missionary doctor came to our country after the war and created prosthetic limbs that could be manufactured in Africa and were simple to use in place of lost limbs. I was just a young girl and grieving that

I couldn't help Mama very well with only one hand when I qualified for my forearm limb. That also made it possible for me to go on for nurse's training and eventually to come to the States. Oh, I knew you were somewhere close by, but I hadn't had time to find the Nicholson family," she finished with a big smile.

"And then God brought us together," Dad finished. "And what a blessing you have already been to us. We are so grateful for your kindness toward Cara!. Now that she is awake again, will you join us as I lead in a prayer of thanksgiving?"

Dad did just that with everyone in the room joining in at the end with a robust, "Amen!"

REACH WIDE: Ideas for Engagement

Locate a world map or globe. Have one person close their eyes and point to somewhere on the map or globe. Locate that country (or the one nearest your finger) in the [Operation World](#) website. As you read a bit about the people who live there, decide how you can pray together for the people of that country. Place a sticky note on the map with a note about your prayer for them. Place it where you can continue to pray for them this month. If someone from that country came to your home or classroom to visit, how would you be compassionate towards them?

RESOURCES

Window on the World: An Operation World Prayer Resource (Operation World Resources, 2018)

Come with Me by Holly m. McGhee & Pascal Lemaitre (G.P. Putnam & Sons, 2017)