

WORTH IT



**GROUP
CURRICULUM**



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WORTH IT



OVERVIEW

“Is it worth it?”

We ask this question a lot when it comes to how we spend our time, talents, and money. Whether we realize it or not, multiple times a day, we judge whether something or someone is, was, or will be, worth it.

- was dining out when you bring kids worth it?
- is entering into a hard conversation with that person worth it?
- is organizing the kids' toys worth it?

Then there are the “bigger” parts of our lives like family, parenting, foster care, and adoption which many of us don't take the time to stop and reflect on if the journey is worth it.

- will that “moment” when you meet your child for the first time be worth it?
- is caring for a child only to reunify them with a birth parent worth it?
- was constantly coming up against blocked care worth it?
- is living in your purpose of becoming a parent worth it?
- was the rejection of not being invited to other kids' parties because of behavioral issues worth it?
- is obedience to the call God has placed on your family worth it?

Sometimes the answer is an emphatic “yes.”

In some cases a defeated and honest “no” could be your response.

Quite often it could be “I'm not sure” or “I can't answer that yet.”

And other times a giant exclamation mark is the only way to answer whether it's worth it.

At Replanted, we get what you are going through. And we are here to process with you and offer you grace and love wherever you are on the “worth it” journey, and to be encouraged by the worth God gives you, your kids, and their birth families.



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WELCOME

to your Replanted Group

We are so excited for you to be a part of this community. If you are new to Replanted, we want to give some basic information about what our groups are like and what you can expect from the group.

PURPOSE

Replanted groups exist so that adoptive, foster, and kinship families (or those who are considering adopting or fostering) can come together for support, encouragement, and discipleship. We know that caring for the needs of children through adoption and foster care is deeply important AND it can be difficult and challenging. Your Replanted group is a place where you can come, just as you are, and give and receive support from other families who "get it." Your children will be able to develop relationships with other kiddos impacted by adoption and foster care as well.

STRUCTURE

Groups generally meet for two hours, once per month. The first part of group is designed for you to share a meal together, and have an informal time for visiting and catching up. In the second part of group, you will work through a devotional as a group and have time for sharing and discussion.

Be blessed,



Jenn Hook
Founder & Executive Director

GROUP GUIDELINES

We know that it can be scary to share how you are doing in a group where you don't know everyone well, especially if you are struggling. To help develop and maintain safety in the group, we ask all group members to follow the following group guidelines. If you have questions about the guidelines, please ask your group leader.

- 1. Engage with grace.** We all have unique experiences and situations, and we each may be struggling in our own way. Wherever we are, we need grace and acceptance. Do your best to extend grace and acceptance to your fellow group members, even if you are surprised by what they share.
- 2. Confidentiality.** As a general guideline, what is said in group stays in group. You can share about your own experience or what you are learning about yourself outside the group, but don't share the experiences of another group member.
- 3. No judgment/criticism.** Making judgment about another group member or criticizing their parenting can make the group feel unsafe. So avoid judging or criticizing. Instead, extend grace and offer compassion to other group members who are struggling.
- 4. Limit advice.** It is normal to want to give advice to other group members. But sometimes we rush into giving advice and try to "fix" a problem, rather than sitting with people in their pain and helping them discover their own solution. So limit your advice unless it is asked for.
- 5. Take risks and share vulnerably.** You will get as much out of the group as you put into it. Take a risk and share vulnerably about your experiences - get the support you need.
- 6. Do not dominate the conversation.** Share the floor with the other group members - let everyone have a chance to participate.
- 7. Commit to attend.** The group will feel safer as all group members attend consistently. Make a commitment to attend the group regularly and make the group a priority. Let the group leader know in advance if you have to miss.
- 8. Avoid discussion of divisive topics.** There are many contentious topics (e.g., political or theological debates) that we may agree or disagree about. In general, we want to avoid these types of discussions in our Replanted groups, and keep the focus on supporting each other and our families.

CONNECTION FOR CHILDREN

We firmly believe that our groups are just as important for our children impacted by adoption and foster care and for children already in the home. There is a uniqueness to their experience as well and we believe deep connections can form between peers when they can share their experiences with one another. So, even if you are in an “okay” place as parents, your children may need this space where they can say “same here” with others impacted by the journey.

REPORTING A CONCERN

ADULT PROGRAM

We do our best to empower and equip local leadership team and facilitators. That being said, sometimes there may be concerns that need to be addressed by the National Replanted Ministry. If you have concerns with the facilitator(s) actions or attitude, or if there is uncertainty whether a subject is being addressed appropriately within the values of the Replanted Ministry, please feel free to email Amy Cope to report your concern amy@replantedministry.org. We will do our best to resolve the concern in a gracious, loving, and compassionate manner.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

The safety of your children is our top priority. Replanted has partnered with MinistrySafe to ensure that committed volunteers are appropriately trained and vetted. All committed volunteers are required to

- a) complete a background check
- b) complete sexual abuse awareness training
- c) sign our policies & procedures document, and
- d) watch our trauma training video prior to serving

If your child reports any concerning behavior from a mentor or peer, please notify Replanted immediately by contacting Amy Cope at amy@replantedministry.org.

INTRODUCTION

This life we're living right now - the stepping-on-eggshells, barely-keeping-our heads-above-water, how-do-we-keep-him-regulated-life - is HARD. Bringing our child home is hard, walking through foster care is hard, being their person after trauma is hard. There is no easy way. But walking through life next to them, every day, step-by-step, things do get better.

Our children will learn we are safe. They will learn we are their people. They will take our last names, or return to those who named them. They will scream and kick and sneak around and cry, but they will also heal and grow, and one day, you will too.

We don't often talk about how living life with kids from hard places is hard. Why? We seem to lack the words to frame how we feel. They were traumatized, so they traumatize you. They feel awful about themselves, so they want to make you feel the same way. You want to offer them goodness, beauty, and life, but they don't trust that the things you offer them are true.

The ideal scenario for them - was never to be with you - and that's a painful truth to internalize. They are only with us because their lives were shattered. Although you try to pick up the pieces and glue them back together as best you can, it's never going to be the same, for either of you. So, you lay in bed at night and ask yourself, is it worth it? Is this path that we chose on our best day, with our most optimistic spirit, worth the heartache and the pain and the grief on our worst day? It depends on whose perspective you choose.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways, my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9

Where I see our children's needs and wounds, God sees their intrinsic value (and the same is true for their birth parents). While I watch one daughter cry over the dysregulation of another sibling, God whispers to both of us not to give up hope. He has a perspective that we can never fully experience, but I wonder if, even in the darkest moments, we can look up just enough to see what He's seeing? From down here, the view may not be great. But from above, God sees from a place that we can barely imagine. It may not feel worth it today, but that doesn't mean it never will.

This year, let's encourage each other to keep going long enough to catch glimpses of God's perspective. Even with as little imagination as I have, I believe that one day my soul will make peace with what my eyes never had the faith to see.

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

Have you ever questioned whether your foster or adoptive parenting journey was "worth it"? What thoughts and feelings come up for you as you think about this question?

What do you think your children would say about their journey? What about their birth family? Was/Is it worth it?