



In grief seek comfort - and give comfort

Bởi:

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“In grief, one seeks and finds comfort in situations that would otherwise be harrowing, if not unbearable... With every painful step, the Lord provided a new comfort, and with each there was the opportunity to express a continuing faith in a God who makes no mistakes.”

C. Everett Koop and Elizabeth Koop: *Sometimes Mountains Move*

After their son was killed in a mountain-climbing accident Dr. and Mrs. Koop wrote this beautiful little book. It was, I think, partly to assuage their anguish and partly to create a legacy for their son. The title came from the fact that just as their son had placed a piton in the rock, “the mountain moved” and he fell to his death.

Notice the progression in what the Koops have written. First comes the tragedy, harrowing and unbearable. Then every painful step forward, each providing a new comfort. And last the opportunity to express a continuing faith – to keep taking step after painful step, and to create meaning in a tragedy that has no inherent meaning.

I once had a chance to ask Dr. Koop what he thought was the most important development in the healthcare field during the 20th century. I thought he would mention the incredible technological advances, since he had been a pioneering pediatric surgeon, or the fights he had led against smoking and AIDS. He surprised me by saying it was the evolution of support groups, because in a support group people come together to reclaim responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

I’ve spent many evenings with support groups of various sorts, and even when I was there because I’d been invited to share some words of inspiration it is always the case that I am more inspired by them than they are by me. And it is often the case that I see people creating some of the most important friendships they’ve ever had as they reach out to comfort one another in what would otherwise be unbearably tragic.