

Brokenness

Tammy: “Oh no...oh no!” shouted my son early one morning. I was busy in the kitchen getting school lunches ready when I heard his scream again: “Oh mum...it’s broken, ...it’s broken!” And after that all I could hear was my 5-year-old son sobbing. I ran upstairs and found him sitting on his bed, holding the pieces of his favorite toy airplane in his hands and crying. He looked up and said, “Mum...my favorite toy fell off the shelf, now it’s broken again!”

Carol: Hello and welcome to *Women of Hope*. I’m Carol. Hi Tammy.

Tammy: Hello! I would like to finish telling you what happened to my friend Tita’s son’s favorite toy.

Carol: Well, He must have really loved it because he sounded heartbroken!

Tammy: It was amazing how this simple, cheap plastic toy had given her son so much pleasure. They had given it to him for his birthday the year before. He’d played and played with it...so much...a few times in the past it had broken but her husband had managed to fix it.

She tried to comfort him: “Don’t worry darling,” She said, “remember that every other time Daddy fixed it for you, so tonight when he gets home we’ll ask him to fix it again.”

“You’re right mum, he always fixes it for me,” he said, wiping away his tears with his hand. He fully trusted in his father’s ability to fix *everything* for him. He went off happily to play with his brother.

That night he gave the broken pieces to his daddy, and went to bed confident that in the morning it would be fixed. But after a while Tita’s husband came to her and said, “I just can’t get the pieces together this time, some of the parts are just too broken.” So her husband, who is clever with his hands, decided to ‘create a new toy.’ He worked away at it and glued the parts in different ways to make a different toy.

In the morning he proudly gave it to their son. “But Dad,” he said, “this is not what my toy looked like before...I don’t like this one...it’s different.” And the tears began to well in his eyes. His father explained to him that it was now a ‘new’ toy made from the pieces of the old broken one. He told him how he’d tried to fix it but this time it just would not fit together as it had always done before.

Their son was not very convinced, but took the toy and looking it over carefully, went into his room. The ‘new’ toy sat on his shelf for a few days, but then he began playing with it. Soon he began to smile, “This is just like having a new toy. It’s different. I like it!”

Carol: Isn't this a great story! Tita's husband must be clever to make a new toy from the old one. And I can just imagine her son's face when his daddy gave him the 'new' toy. It was not what he'd expected. But I like the ending – when her son decided that he really liked the 'new' toy after all.

Tammy: You know I have a reason for telling this story. In life, our relationships are very valuable and precious. But like Tita's son's toy, they can get damaged or broken. Nobody wants to have a broken friendship...or a broken marriage...or a bad relationship with a child, or a loved one. But we all make mistakes at times...and we hurt other people...or we get hurt.

Have you ever been hurt? Have you ever hurt someone you love? Sadly I have to admit that I have. I know that sometimes I've said or done things that have hurt people I love. I may not have *meant* to cause them pain but the reality is that I *have*. And other times I've been hurt by other people. I know that I'm not the *only* one who's had this problem. Perhaps right now you're listening and thinking, "Yes I have in my hands the pieces of a broken relationship with a friend...or my husband...or one of my children...and I don't know if I can fix it." Or maybe it's your *own* heart that's broken and in pieces...and you feel an enormous pain. You don't know how to put the pieces back together.

So what can you do? Do we have to just live with the pain, or is there a way we can fix broken relationships?

Carol: Here on *Women of Hope*, Tammy has told us the story of Tita's son and his broken toy. And she's just told us that in our lives we often have broken relationships. I'm sure you know what she's talking about. I know I do.

Now she just asked the question: Is there a way we can fix broken relationships, or do we have to just live with the pain? What do you think?...

Tammy: Let me share with you what Tita said she learned. She said: "I remember one time when a close friend really hurt me. I felt betrayed...and very angry...and sad. I was so upset that I thought the best thing was never to see that person again. I felt that my trust in her was broken, so I decided to move on with my life. I wanted to leave the pieces of that broken friendship behind.

Unfortunately, this did not work very well. I would go to *places* that kept reminding me of that friendship. There were *things* in my life that reminded me of her. Trying to pretend that nothing had happened was not the answer. The broken pieces were still there to remind me."

Carol: So what did she do about it?

Tammy: Tita said she learned that first she had to *accept that she had a problem* and that she had to *deal with it*. Ignoring it was not going to make her pain go away. She said, “I realized that I had to have the courage to speak to the person who had hurt me.” Have you ever had to do that? It’s scary, isn’t it? You don’t know how the other person is going to react. But she knew she *had* to do it.

Carol: Oh I know how scary that might be for her. How *did* the other person react?

Tammy: It was hard because she didn’t think that she’d done anything wrong. This of course made Tita feel more hurt and broken. She said, ‘I tried even harder to convince myself that I would be alright...that I could forget about all this...and move on with my life. But...the pain and anger in my heart would not go away. It would flare up when I least expected it. This was not doing me any good, so I needed to do something...’

She knew she had to *forgive* her friend even if this felt *almost impossible*. It took Tita a *lot* of courage to forgive her because her friend would not accept that she had done anything to hurt her.

Carol: I can’t imagine how hard this must have been. What happened?

Tammy: Well, this is what she said, “I had to ask God to *help* me to forgive her. I couldn’t do it on my own. And you know, when I *did* forgive her, I felt as if a heavy weight had been lifted off my shoulders. I was free again.”

Carol: It’s wonderful that she had the weight lifted. And I know she was relieved to feel free again. But what about her broken friendship? Was it mended again?

Tammy: Well...remember her son’s broken toy? It was fixed but now it had a different shape. Tita said, “Our friendship also changed after that experience. It was not the same. I couldn’t really trust her not to hurt me again. So I could not enjoy her friendship as I did before. This was a very sad time for me. She had been a special person in my life and I missed her friendship...”

Have you ever experienced something like this?

Carol: Tammy has been telling us about Tita’s broken relationship with her friend.

She asked God to help her to forgive her friend...and he did. She said she felt free – as if a heavy weight had been lifted off her shoulders. But like her son’s toy, her friendship was different now. She felt she couldn’t trust her friend not to hurt her again. I wonder, do you know how that feels?

Let’s find out more about ...how God helped Tita with her friend. Tammy will tell us what Tita said:

Tammy: She said, “I tried to tell myself that I had forgiven my friend, and time would help me to forget all about her friendship. I did not want these painful memories...but nothing I did would take the pain away...it was so frustrating! I knew that I had honestly forgiven her, but every time I bumped into her the pain and sad memories would rush back into my mind. People say: “Forgive and forget.” But this seemed impossible to do!

One day, as I was chatting to another very wise friend about this problem, I said: “You know... I wish I could get rid of the sad feelings and pain. I have done everything I could do, but the pain is still there. Why can't I forget all this and move on?”

My dear friend looked me in the eye and said, “Tita, have you asked Jesus to heal your broken heart?” As soon as she said that, I realized she was right! I had been very busy trying to mend my broken heart and my pain all by myself...and that was the problem! I had not asked for Jesus' help.”

Carol: Now, I can almost hear you asking, “What did she mean by that?” Let me explain to you. I want you to imagine yourself holding a piece of broken glass in your hand. Can you see it in your mind? It has sharp edges and if you don't handle it carefully, you can easily cut yourself with it.

We live in a world where good *and* bad things happen to *all* of us. When something really bad happens to a person their heart breaks and becomes like that sharp edged piece of glass. This can happen many times...and they go through life hurting other people because of the ‘sharp edges’ of their broken hearts. When we're broken we feel angry or sad and we're less likely to be nice to other people.

Tammy: Can you see how this can happen? If, for whatever reason, we have broken, sharp edges in our hearts, we will hurt other people even if we don't mean to! Or they will hurt us – even if they don't mean to.

Tita came to realize that her friend did not *mean* to hurt her! *Her friend* was acting out of *her* brokenness. Her heart had been broken and had sharp edges that were hurting her... she could still feel the pain.

Carol: So what should we do about the broken, sharp edges of our hearts?

Tammy: Well...the good news is that *Jesus* has the *power* to heal our broken hearts. One day when Jesus, the son of God was teaching a group of men he said: “The Spirit of God is on me, because God anointed me to preach the good news to the poor, and to heal the heartbroken...” (Isa 61: 1 The Message)

This is the exciting part for you and me. Jesus knew that we would live in a world where there is good *and* evil. He knew we would experience pain, and hurt and sadness, because while he lived on Earth *he* experienced pain and hurt and sadness. One time his dear friend Lazarus died...and Jesus wept. Yes, Jesus experienced sadness. His closest friends ran away and hid when he was arrested. He must have felt betrayed and hurt. He understands our pain and our hurts and our sadness. And he has the power to completely heal our broken hearts.

Carol: Perhaps your heart is broken because your husband has left you... Perhaps you've lost a child and feel that you will never recover from this pain... or could it be that you've been abused by someone you trusted? The pain is so big that your heart is broken in so many pieces that nothing you do can fix it.

Well dear friend, I have more good news...even though we do wrong things and we all deserve punishment, Jesus came to take that punishment for us. That's why he died on the cross. So the first step for you is to invite Jesus into your life. He is waiting for you. He longs to help you but he will wait until you open the door of your broken heart to him. If you have not done this yet, I would like to invite you to say a simple prayer with me. Would you like to pray to him right now? "Jesus, my heart is broken, I am suffering and need your help. Thank you for dying on the cross to take the punishment for me. Please come into my life and heal me. I accept that I can't do this on my own. Amen"

Once Jesus is part of your life, he is the one who has the power to begin smoothing those broken sharp edges. And do you know he can put all the broken pieces back together again...in the right places.

If you have prayed that prayer with us today, we would love to hear from you. Or if you would like us to pray for you, ... you can write to us in care of this station or at *Women of Hope*.

Tammy: Before we go let me tell you the end of the story?

Well Tita said that when she allowed Jesus to heal the broken relationship with her friend, he made it into something different. It was even better than it had been before. Their friendship became stronger. They both still had the memories of the past hurts but the pain gradually disappeared. Those memories helped them to become *better* friends. They knew they would still make mistakes...but they learned to talk about things. They learned to understand each other. They learned to forgive each other and move on.

Tita said, "The new shape of our friendship is so much better than the original one. I love this friend now more than ever, just as my son loved his toy when it was glued into a different shape."

Carol: Remember...if you have a broken heart or a broken relationship, make sure that you bring all the pieces to Jesus. He is the expert at healing our broken hearts.

Let him take away your pain and replace it with his love! It's time for us to go now. But we'll be back again soon. Have a wonderful week and God bless you!

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