

**Jasmine Young | CD702 | ATS Triad Summary | March 4, 2023**

My ATS Counseling Triad experience has been an answered prayer. In the course, I was paired with two men who are largely opposite of me in age, degree of study, church and professional experience, and culturally. Yet in the Triad we enjoyed an immediate and deep commonality that permeated all those differences and met one another in Christ. Here is a summary of our Triad experiences.

***Day 1***

Having completed the lectures about grief, our initial Triad meeting centered on this topic. We carefully practiced our roles as Speaker, Listener, and Observer and we talked about grief. I learned that both young men had lost their fathers to illness. One relatively recently and the other several years ago. In each case, my brothers were dealing with severe grief. In one instance, the death of the father occurred over seven years ago. My brother was dealing not only with the unmanaged grief, but also a deep sense of guilt. He was guilty because his father had not known Christ when he died, and he's lived with a guilt that perhaps he could have ministered to him more as the only Christian in their family. My other brother has a father who was also a nonbeliever but was otherwise in a Christian household. Though some of his family lacked faith, they were certainly exposed to the gospel. He grieves because he feels closer to his deceased father than his siblings, and so for these past couple years he's had no one to vent his more personal thoughts to, because his siblings simply refuse to talk about their father's memory. I shared with them that I had not suffered the loss of a parent, and even my grandparents were gone before I reached full adulthood, so I haven't felt the deep sense of loss on my adult years that they have. My closest experience, however, occurred recently when I lost my childhood best friend to her lifelong illness. I was devastated with grief after it finally sunk in that a large part of me had gone missing forever. I was so moved with compassion for her young life that I had a

hard time accepting the truth of her passing. But I knew enough about grief to face it and allow those feelings to surface. I dedicated a day or two to mourning her, my husband supported me by looking after the kids and the household. And I felt so much more complete by expressing my grief to family and to friends she did not know, as they responded so positively in support. I learned in this portion of triad that we can't fully grieve alone, and that we belong in community, not in isolation, during this process. It was good for me to take this class and meet my triad in the same month as her burial.

### ***Day 2***

Though we had forged such a quick and intimate connection, we had not gotten to know each other very much. This triad was more a conversation, where we discussed what we had just learned in class. Aptly, the lecture was about grief on this day. This allowed us to revisit the topic of grief that we had shared on the prior day. We discussed what things we had learned or that had been confirmed in the lecture. We learned through this conversation more about one another's lives, our spouses, significant others, children. And we learned about what goals we had to finish seminary and our processing of our ministry callings.

### ***Day 3***

We dug more into our obstacles in calling. For me, the days' lectures had been highly reaffirming. I, however, am near the end of my seminary journey and have had more time processing my call with the help of mentors in this space. For my brothers, one who is relatively new in his seminary experience and another who is a non-traditional student of ten years, the crisis of calling is unique. One brother is pursuing God having finally relinquished his dream of professional sports, and with the newly freed focus on his call, he is beginning to unlearn many of the legalistic and traditional habits that had molded his Christian experience. My other brother is an entrepreneur and has had trouble committing to God what he started, to finish seminary. He

shared with us also the added complexity of growing together with his spouse, whom he also had to protect from church hurt in their prior congregation, where he served. This has led them to be absent of a church family for some time. They serve in diaspora churches and have been reluctant to return for concern that the same thing would happen again, or at least those same hurtful wounds would resurface.

#### ***Day 4***

Our triad concluded the live course today, and we spent the time reflecting on who we were to God, as children and as ministers. We reflected on past events and how God's hand was in it, for example the breakup of one of my brothers and his significant other. And we reflected on those more difficult questions about our life in ministry, again using the listener/observer/speaker model. The unanswered questions around calling which surfaced were "how do I find my own voice"? "how do I make more time for God to use me?", "is this a blessing from God or a distraction of the enemy", "will I be able to commit to what God has ahead?". We continued our custom to pray together before we parted. And we committed to stay together as a triad after the live course. We exchanged contact information.

#### ***Since the course***

Our triad has continued to meet in February, each time on a Saturday morning. Listening to one another, I shared a devastating emotional outburst that I had at home, and my brothers listened carefully and intently at my story, and feeling heard was a good dose of medicine. I've since come to appreciate that anxiety had driven my emotions, and so being in the presence of my brothers helped surface that anxiety so it could be addressed. We spoke more about marriage and family then, and I drew strength from my brother, married 17 years to my 11, and felt deeply encouraged. One of my brothers has gone on a mission trip since class, and shared how it helped shape his relationship with God and others. We continue to pray for my brother and his business,

that he finishes the coursework this week while maintaining his responsibilities, and that he learn to trust God in his business dealings in a new way. We'll meet again in two Saturdays, and I look forward to meeting up in person one day.

The triad experience has been an answered prayer not only because it has linked me with brothers in ministry but because it has also taught me how to be a better friend to any future friends I meet. Indeed, we all *need better friends*. I have learned to be a better listener and I have even had the opportunity to use these skills since our lectures. The process has made me a better listener but has also taught me two things (1) we must trust God to do the transformation and not lean to our own understanding and (2) we absolutely must invite God into these spaces as if they were his sanctuary, because they are!

I give my triad members, Chase Barbe and Jungbum "JB" Seo, an A+.