

## Dealing with Grief and Loss

Coping with a significant loss in your life or the recent death of someone you loved is always very painful. It hurts emotionally in so many ways that the loss can seem unbearable at the time. Often it feels as if the pain will never subside and this can seem scary for young adults who may be experiencing death or loss for the very first time in their lives. It is important at this time in your life to allow yourself time to grieve in your own way, and know that there is no one particular way to grieve and everyone experiences grief and loss in a their own way, in their own time.

Experts in the field of grief and loss have found that most people follow a stage of phases in dealing with grief and loss. Although not everyone may go through all of these phases it's important to note that some people take longer to heal than others.

The five phases of grief are:

**Denial** – feeling that this just can't be happening or that you can escape.

**Anger** – thinking that there is something to blame or blaming yourself for what has happened.

**Bargaining** – having thoughts that if you do something “good” you can make the “bad” thing go away.

**Depression** – extreme sadness that lasts for days where you don't want to do any of the things you used to do for “fun” or feeling that you're not allowed to have fun any more in your life.

**Acceptance** – finally feeling that you are more at peace with what has happened and starting to move on with your own life while also having an increased ability to accept what has happened.

It's important to find support from family members, friends, relatives, or classmates in order to be able to start to heal. It can be helpful to join a grief support group in order to talk about your pain and hear how other people deal with their pain and loss. Additionally, talking one-on-one with a therapist or counselor can assist you in moving through the stages of grief faster than if you do it alone. If you have thoughts of ending your life as a way to escape from the pain of loss, then it's extremely important to find someone that you can trust to talk to about your feelings. It's also very important NOT to GRIEVE alone but to become connected with others.

Having some kind of faith can be of great comfort during a time of grief and loss in order to make sense of the things that have happened. Getting in touch with your faith can heal you in many ways because it can give you a renewed sense of strength. No matter what kind of loss you are dealing with it's important to know and truly believe that it will get better with time and that eventually you will be able to enjoy life again.

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