

GRIEF AND LOSS

At some point in your life, you are going to lose someone you love. Grief can be very painful but it is completely natural.

THE PROCESS OF GRIEF

Grieving takes time, strength and support to overcome the loss of someone close to you. Below are common stages one may experience from the loss of a loved one: (Keep in mind that the stages will vary for everyone and there is no schedule for grief.)

5 STAGES OF	
1. DENIAL	– A feeling of disbelief. You may need to sit down and try to absorb what actually happened. You may not be able to speak or answer questions, thoughts race through your mind and you are unable to make sense of anything. Shock may last just minutes or up to several days.
2. ANGER	– You may feel angry and that the loss just isn't fair. You may question who is to blame and why it happened.
3. BARGAINING	– In dealing with the reality of the loss, you may try to find a way out. It's common to try to make sense of what happened and how you can change the situation.
4. DEPRESSION	– You may feel a sense of hopelessness and panic that you will never get over the loss. It's common to feel low and not want to do anything. The severity of the pain differs for everyone depending on how great the loss.
5. ACCEPTANCE	– Starting to accept the loss. You begin to move on and have hope for the future. You realize that loss is a part of life and that just because you're not in pain anymore doesn't mean you've forgotten the person. You reorganize your life and start doing things you enjoy again. It takes time and every once in a while you will be emotional, but it will pass and is perfectly normal.
Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, <i>On Death and Dying</i> , Macmillan, NY, 1969	

TIPS FOR A GRIEVING FRIEND

- ***Make contact.*** Either in person or on the phone. You may feel uncomfortable but you need to put your feelings aside and be there for your friend.
- ***Talk.*** It's ok to talk about the person who has died. Don't pretend as though they didn't exist.
- ***Be patient.*** Don't push them to move on and get over it. Let them grieve and go through the process at their own pace.
- ***Listen.*** Don't try to fix them and tell them what they should do or feel, just listen with an open mind.
- ***Encourage.*** While supporting them, try to encourage or help your friend to get through the daily responsibilities. Offer your assistance with those responsibilities and encourage your friend to take care of herself/himself.
- ***Be positive.*** It's important to take care of yourself. You can't save the world so if you feel overwhelmed, step back. You're no help to anyone if you can't help yourself first.
- ***Be there.*** Just being there helps.



CHECK THESE OUT:

http://www.helpguide.org/mental_emotional_health.htm

<http://www.virtualhospice.ca>

<http://www.centerforloss.com>