

## Stages of Grief

1. Stage One: Shock or Denial. Can last from a few hours to a few days. Acts as an anesthesia helping you cope with the situation at hand.
2. Stage Two: Express Emotions.
3. Stage Three: Depression or Loneliness set in. Despair sets in and we question God.
4. Stage Four: Physical Symptoms set in. Headaches, body aches, sleep too much or not enough, upset stomach, diarrhea, shaking, coldness.
5. Stage Five: Panic. Fear of the unknown can sometimes paralyze you, or causes you to over react to the smallest of situations.
6. Stage Six: Guilt. You won't forgive yourself for not being there when the person died. You are convinced that if you only did more for that person, they might still be here today. Or, thoughts that your behavior towards that person might have actually caused their death. Sometimes it is just the pain in remembering all the things you did that hurt that person and never asked forgiveness for.
7. Stage Seven: Anger and Resentment. You are angry at the person for leaving you, or leaving you in a difficult situation (insurance, bills, alone with children, missed experiences). It is normal to feel resentment that you are left with more responsibilities. You might be critical of everything and everyone who was related to the loss. You look for someone to blame, including God.
8. Stage Eight: Resist Returning to Normal. The only way to keep that person's memory alive is to continue in grief, or so you think. By refusing to return to your normal activities and routines and relationships, you think you are keeping that person in your life. You are really letting that person keep you from life.
9. Stage Nine: Hope. Gradually you will be able to see signs of hope that your life is not over and you can move on to other relationships and activities. Memories will be a wonderful thing instead of painful.
10. Stage Ten: Struggle to Affirm Reality. We gradually get back to regular routines, feelings and relationships with a healthier attitude.

\*Based on the book Good Grief by Granger E. Westberg

**Family Foundations**

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