

GRIEVING WITH HOPE

KEY TEXT: John 16:16-24

¹⁶“A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.” ¹⁷So some of his disciples said to one another, “What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?” ¹⁸So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.” ¹⁹Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’?” ²⁰Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. ²¹When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²²So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

DEFINITION

Grief is the inner pain and anxiety in response to any real or perceived significant loss.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GRIEF

1. Universal human experience
2. Normal to any significant loss or perceived loss
3. Christians are not exempt – 1 Thess. 4:13-18
4. Christian grief has a unique element and wonderful helper
5. The intensity of grief is in proportion to the meaning assigned to the loss

PROPOSITION

Grief is not an option – we must deal with grief or grief will deal with us.

RECOGNIZING GRIEF

The symptoms are not in an orderly progression, may overlap, and are not universal.



PHYSICAL

Appetite loss	Indigestion	Headaches
Irregular sleep	Restlessness	Many complaints
Weakness	Exhaustion	

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Denial	Tearfulness	Inner pain
Anger	Depression	Forgetfulness
Negativity	Bargaining	
Helplessness	Hopelessness	

RELATIONAL

Fear/anxiety	Withdrawal
Irritability	Loss of interest in sex

SPIRITUAL

Anger at God	God seems distant	Not want to worship
Bitterness	Resentment	Blame God
Conflicts		



STAGES OF GRIEF (from Kubler-Ross)

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

PROGRESSION in “GOOD GRIEF”

1. Ability to deal with reality by re-entry into daily life
2. Acceptance of the present circumstances
3. Recounting positive memories with thanksgiving
4. Re-entry into decision making
5. Planning for the future
6. Ability to laugh
7. Re-gaining self-esteem

STAGNATION in unhealthy grief (pathological)

These symptoms are of concern especially if they are prolonged

1. Absence of mourning
2. Disorientation
3. Personality change
4. Phobias
5. Escape by self-medication in substance or process methods (alcohol, drugs, work, etc.)
6. Prolonged physical complaints, withdrawal, and unhealthy behaviors
7. Living in make-believe world

JESUS AND GRIEF (John 11:21-35)

THE “GOOD” IN GRIEF

1. The learning
2. The compassion (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

RESOURCES

Sittser, Jerry. (2004). *A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows Through Loss*. Expanded Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.



THE PROCESS OF DYING FOUR CONCEPTUAL MODELS

GLORIA M. FRANCIS / "EMOTIONAL STAGES" (1)						
	1. Denial	2. Anxiety	3. Regression	4. Depression	5. Realistic Adaptation	
ROBERT E. NEAL / "A REALISTIC AND MEANINGFUL PILGRIMAGE TOWARD DEATH AND NEW LIFE" (2)						
Aspects	1. Denial	2. Fear	3. Grief	4. Belief	5. Martyrdom	
Stages	1. Death (knowledge)		2. Gestation	3. Rebirth		
CARL A. NIGHSWONGER (REV.) / "SERIES OF DRAMAS" (3)						
Dramas	1. Shock	2. Emotion	3. Negotiation	4. Cognition	5. Commitment	6. Completion
Healthy	Denial	Catharsis Anger	Bargaining	Realistic Hope: search for meaning	Acceptance	Fulfillment
Unhealthy	Panic	Depression Guilt & Shame	Selling Out Withdrawal	Bitterness Despair Gloom	Resignation	Forlornness
ELISABETH KUBLER-ROSS / "COPING MECHANISMS AT THE TIME OF TERMINAL ILLNESS" (4)						
Stages	1. Denial	2. Anger	3. Bargaining	4. Depression	5. Acceptance	

D
E
A
T
H

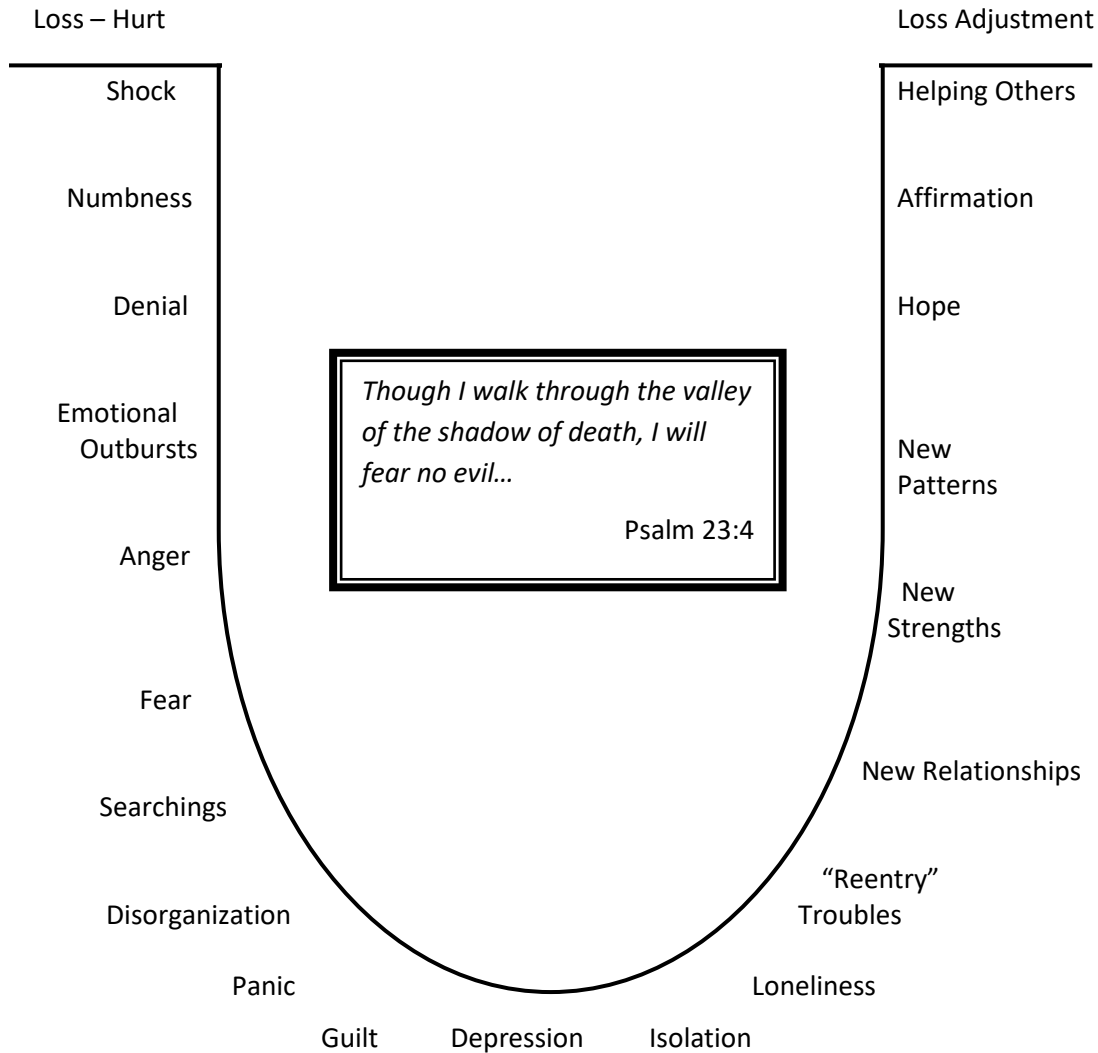
(1) Francis, Gloria M., "Emotional Stages," *American Journal of Nursing*, August 1963.

(2) Neale, Robert E., "Exploration in Death Education," *Pastoral Psychology*, November 1971, p 33.

(3) Nighswonger, Carl A. "Ministry to the Dying as a Learning Encounter," *The Journal of Pastoral Care*, Vol 26, No. 2, June 1972, p 86-92.

(4) Ross, E., (M.D.) "Afraid to Die," *Pastoral Theology*, June 1972.

GRIEF - RECOVERY



1. Cross out the stages you have already experienced.
2. List ways you have freed yourself from being “stuck” in one phase.
3. Make some statements to yourself about your own patterns of handling loss experiences. (Examples: “I turn inward instead of outward.” “I internalize my anger.”)
4. List the strengths you now have because of the grief you have experienced. (Examples: “I’m a survivor!” “I’ve learned empathy for others.”)
5. What are ways you can use these new strengths to help others?

H Norman Wright, *Recovering from the Losses of Life*, p. 121



© 2019, Jack Rozell. No portion of this material may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other – except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of Jack Rozell. Mail permission requests to: MRAP/MRI, PO Box 1030, Woodinville, WA 98072.