# Stages of Grief (Kubler-Ross)



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\*Not everyone goes through all five stages. Not everyone goes through the stages in this order.

### 1. <u>Denial</u>

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- -This stage basically helps you "survive" the situation. You may deny what is going on (because you are in shock, overwhelmed) & start to feel "numb".
  - -Example: A soldier is killed & his mother refuses to accept this news, thinks son may have been misidentified
  - -Example: A person who has terminal cancer is in denial about their prognosis
- -Once the denial & shock fades away, the healing process begins.

## 2. Anger

- -In this stage, anger starts to set in. You may feel life isn't fair, blame others, direct anger towards those closest to you, etc.
- -Those who are religious might suddenly question their beliefs (might direct anger towards God)
- -Feeling anger isn't necessarily a bad thing... it's a necessary emotion in the healing process.

## 3. <u>Bargaining</u>

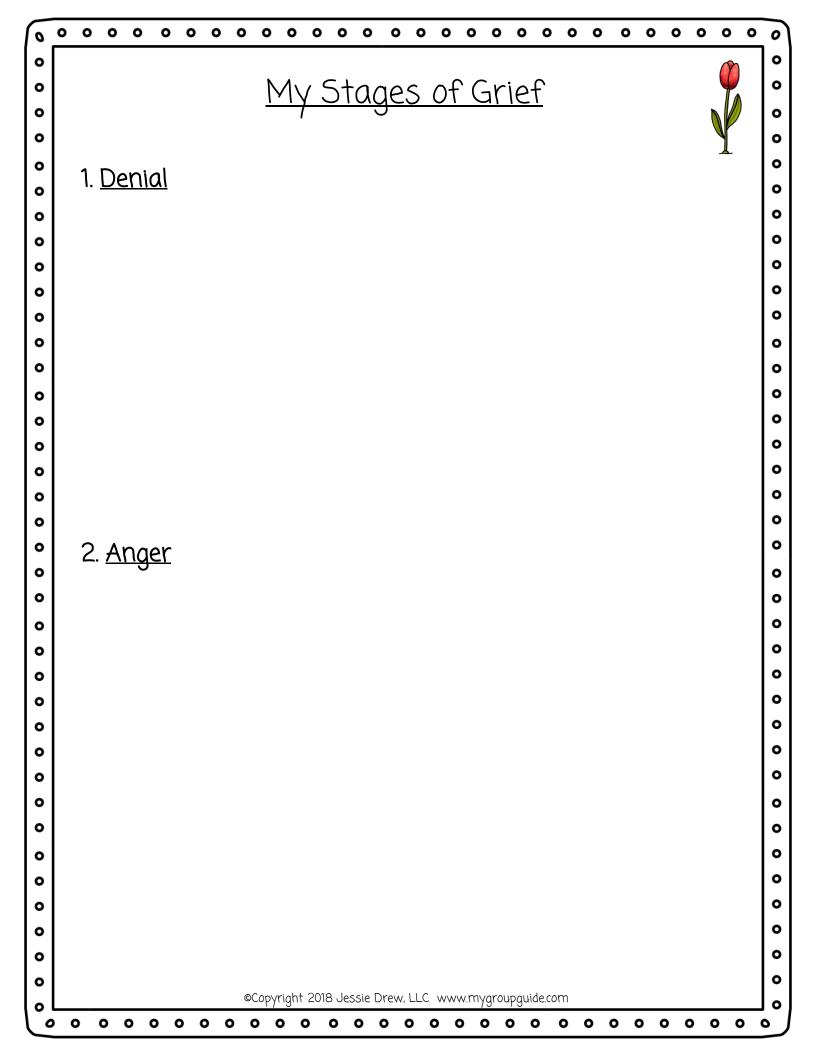
- -In this stage, a person may plead, negotiate.
  - -Example: "Please God, if you save my son, I will never drive drunk again"
- -In this stage, a person may feel a lot of guilt, ask "what if" questions (i.e. "What if I took better care of him?")

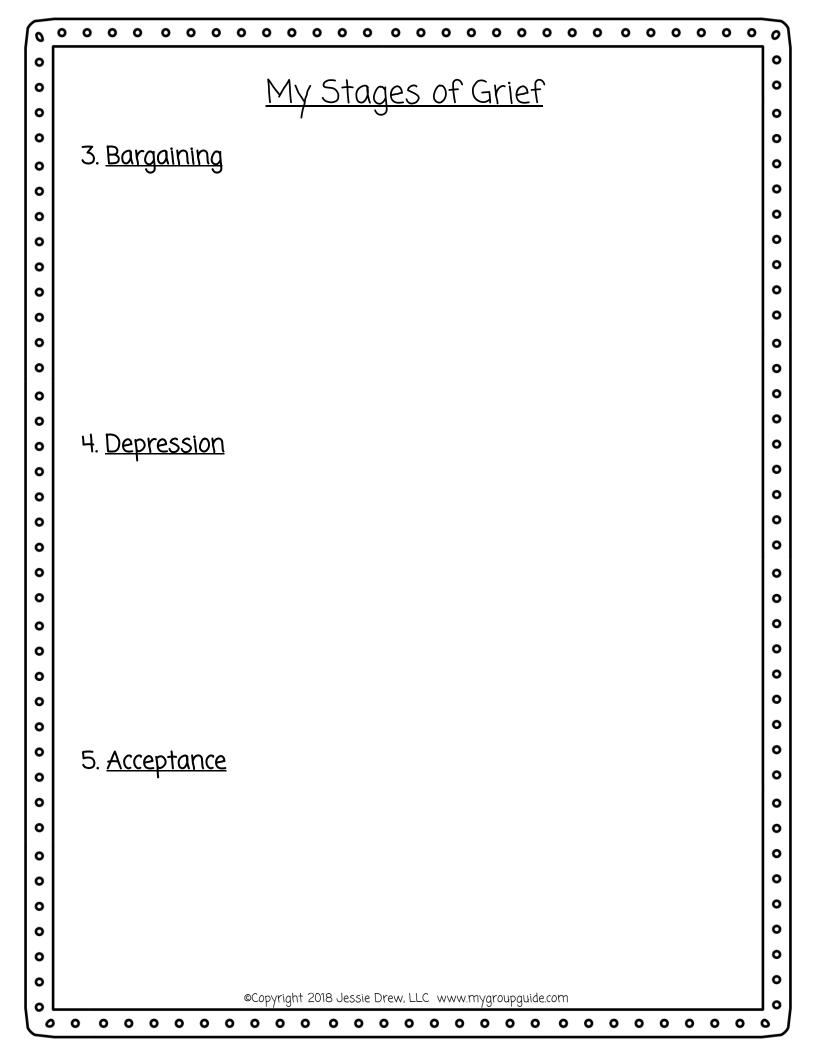
## 4. Depression

- -In this stage, you start to feel hopeless, empty.
- -This does not necessarily mean you have a mental illnessfeeling depressed is part of the grief process
- -In this stage, you may isolate yourself, experience suicidal ideation.

## 5. <u>Acceptance</u>

- -In this stage, you come to terms with your "new reality".
- -You don't necessarily feel "okay" or "over it", but you learn to live with the situation.
- -In this stage, you are going through adjustments and will experience good days & bad days.
- -You try to live your life, form new relationships, etc.





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#### 1. DENIAL

- -This stage basically helps you "survive" the situation. You may deny what is going on (because you are in shock, overwhelmed) & start to feel "numb".
  - -EXAMPLE: A SOLDIER IS KILLED & HIS MOTHER REFUSES TO ACCEPT THIS NEWS, THINKS SON MAY HAVE BEEN MISIDENTIFIED
  - -EXAMPLE: A PERSON WHO HAS TERMINAL CANCER IS IN DENIAL ABOUT THEIR PROGNOSIS
- -ONCE THE DENIAL & SHOCK FADES AWAY, THE HEALING PROCESS BEGINS.

#### 2. ANGER

- -IN THIS STAGE, ANGER STARTS TO SET IN. YOU MAY FEEL LIFE ISN'T FAIR, BLAME OTHERS, DIRECT ANGER TOWARDS THOSE CLOSEST TO YOU, ETC.
- -Those who are religious might suddenly question their beliefs (might direct anger towards God)
- -FEELING ANGER ISN'T NECESSARILY A BAD THING... IT'S A NECESSARY EMOTION IN THE HEALING PROCESS.

### 3. BARGAINING

- -IN THIS STAGE, A PERSON MAY PLEAD, NEGOTIATE.
  - -EXAMPLE: "PLEASE GOD, IF YOU SAVE MY SON, I WILL NEVER DRIVE DRUNK AGAIN"
- -IN THIS STAGE, A PERSON MAY FEEL A LOT OF GUILT, ASK "WHAT IF" QUESTIONS (I.E. "WHAT IF I TOOK BETTER CARE OF HIM?")

#### 4. DEPRESSION

- -IN THIS STAGE, YOU START TO FEEL HOPELESS, EMPTY.
  - -THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN YOU HAVE A MENTAL ILLNESS- FEELING DEPRESSED IS PART OF THE GRIEF PROCESS
- -IN THIS STAGE, YOU MAY ISOLATE YOURSELF, EXPERIENCE SUICIDAL IDEATION.

#### 5. ACCEPTANCE

- -IN THIS STAGE, YOU COME TO TERMS WITH YOUR "NEW REALITY".
- -YOU DON'T NECESSARILY FEEL "OKAY" OR "OVER IT", BUT YOU LEARN TO LIVE WITH THE SITUATION.
- -IN THIS STAGE, YOU ARE GOING THROUGH ADJUSTMENTS AND WILL EXPERIENCE GOOD DAYS & BAD DAYS.
- -YOU TRY TO LIVE YOUR LIFE, FORM NEW RELATIONSHIPS, ETC.



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2. <u>Anger</u>	

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3. <u>Bargaining</u>

4. Depression

5. Acceptance

