

# Five Stages of Grief™

## Kubler-Ross Model

God created us to grieve. The emotions of grief are not wrong or to be feared. These emotions indicate how our hearts live and have passion, but also how they hurt and experience pain. Research by Kubler-Ross provides the natural stages of grief a person goes through when experiencing loss. Use these stages of grief as a guide to give you greater insight into what your kids may be experiencing when they grieve the loss of a friend or loved one.

### Stage 1: Denial and Isolation

Just taking time to name your emotions helps to bring you out of denial. Talking to others or God brings connection in relationships. Asking your children good questions can help them identify their emotions. Be patient in helping them understand their emotions and let them know you are their teammate and their struggle doesn't have to be done alone.

### Stage 2: Anger

This can range from confusion and frustration to angry feelings and expressions of that anger. These emotions are not wrong, but should be identified as part of the process your body is experiencing. Encourage your children by letting them know these emotions are a natural part of grieving. Ask questions and give them an outlet for expressing their emotion. Be patient with outbursts or even abnormal behavior.

### Stage 3: Depression

Sadness and feelings of being overwhelmed can lead to depression if left unchecked. Reaching out to a friend or just establishing a routine like exercising can be so beneficial. Developing a routine and structure for your children gives them something to expect and stability in a time when life may feel so chaotic or overwhelming. Check in with your children often to indicate how they may be feeling.

### Stage 4: Bargaining

The desire for things to be different and bargaining with God about circumstances like death of a loved one, or loneliness might lead to "what if" questions. "What if God would have saved my friend?" If you find yourself or your children asking questions like this, ask God to give you wisdom to turn the question around and ask God, "How are you going to use this event in my life?"

### Stage 5: Acceptance

No one goes sequentially through the stages, but you will find your children going in and out of each of them at different times. The important thing is to give yourself and loved ones permission to have these feelings because that is the way God has created us to experience life. Once you have named an emotion or stage of grief, go to your Heavenly Father with an honest heart and seek His healing. Pray with and for your children to experience healing for their hearts.