

# Ten Stages of Grief You May Experience

## **I. SHOCK**

Temporarily stunned . . . this lasts for minutes, hours or even days. Soon with time you will face your emotions and make decisions.

## **II. FACING EMOTIONS**

Emotions are your feelings. They are intense. Confront these feelings honestly. Get supportive help. During this time, do not make major decisions.

## **III. DEPRESSION**

Crisis is a new state of isolation. Your depression may be due to many stresses. It's okay to cry. Keep life simple. Get rest. Reduce stress. Reach out to others.

## **IV. PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS**

Your thoughts can cause physical distress. These physical symptoms can be the result of unresolved grief. Talk with your family doctor.

## **V. PANIC**

Your fear of facing the unknown can create a state of panic. Panic is normal. Avoid being impulsive. Go slowly in making decisions if this stage occurs.

## **VI. GUILT**

You may experience guilt in crisis. Healthy guilt is the result of feeling helpless, and is often about something you either did or did not do prior to the crisis or loss. Guilt becomes unhealthy when it lingers or affects the quality of your life.

## **VII. ANGER**

Your crisis may create strong feelings of anger and resentment. These feelings are normal. You may want to blame someone or something. This is the time to seek support for your feelings. Expressing your anger non-destructively is good. Exercise, journal writing, or talking with a trusted friend will help.

## **VIII. RESISTANCE**

You resist returning to normal life because it feels too unreal or too painful. Decision-making is difficult. It is important to balance your life. Give time to each part – self, home, work, family, and feelings.

## **IX. HOPE**

Life becomes meaningful once again. You express emotions, seek affection, receive encouragement – you feel you have survived this crisis. You want to smile again and remember the good. You grow stronger and begin again.

## **X. ACCEPTANCE**

Acceptance does come in time. Until then, we encourage you to progress through these stages at your own pace.

## **HEALING YOUR HEART**

Be gentle with yourself. This crisis has created stress in your life. It will take time and energy to feel whole and find peace of mind. Allow yourself your feelings.