



October: Grief and Loss

WHAT PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS NEED TO KNOW

Grief is a person's normal response to a loss. Grief can be felt when we lose someone or something that is important to us. It can be felt from the death of a loved one (including pets), divorce, changing in relationships, changes in your health, losing a job, and even moving to a new place. Today, many people are feeling symptoms of grief brought on by a global pandemic, political unrest, and social traumas. Symptoms of grief can be felt physically and emotionally and can play out in your feelings, thoughts, physical sensations, and behaviors. Grief is experienced differently by everyone and the symptoms can include anger, anxiety, irritability, confusion, disbelief, dizziness, upset stomach, crying spells, loss of energy and interest in enjoyable activities.

Being aware of the five stages of grief developed by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, widely known Psychiatrist, can help. The five stages of grief are:

1. **Denial** – feeling in shock and pretending this is not happening
2. **Anger** – feeling angry and irritable over small things
3. **Bargaining** – living through the “what if’s” or wanting to change the outcome
4. **Depression** – sadness, withdrawal, losing interest in things that brought you joy
5. **Acceptance** – coming to terms with your new reality

Additional Resources

- It's important to know that not everyone moves through these stages in sequential order. Learn more about the five stages of grief from Vanessa Leon, Mary's Center Mental Health Therapist, by clicking [here](#).
- [PsychologyToday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com)
- [FamilyDoctor.org](https://www.familydoctor.org)