

COPING WITH GRIEF

Grief is a natural response to loss. Kübler-Ross identified five common stages people may experience. These stages can occur after many types of loss – not only death – such as the end of a relationship, redundancy, changes in health, or losing a home. **People move through grief in different ways.** The stages may happen in any order, overlap, or be revisited. Thoughts and emotions can change over time, and there is no fixed timeline for grief.

Denial - You may feel numb, shocked, or disconnected from what has happened. **Helpful strategies:** give yourself time to process, stick to simple routines, and talk gently about the loss when you feel ready.

Anger - Feelings of frustration, resentment, or blame (towards yourself, others, or the situation) are common. **Helpful strategies:** release anger safely through exercise or writing, use calming techniques, and express feelings without harming yourself or others.

Bargaining - You may find yourself thinking “what if” or wishing you could change the outcome. **Helpful strategies:** notice self-blame, practise self-compassion, and focus on what you can control in the present.

Depression - You may feel sadness, emptiness, tiredness, or withdrawal from others. **Helpful strategies:** maintain basic self-care (sleep, food, movement), stay connected to supportive people, and seek help if feelings feel heavy or persistent.

Acceptance This stage does not mean the loss is “okay,” but that you are learning to live with it. **Helpful strategies:** acknowledge progress, rebuild routines, set gentle goals, and allow space for ongoing emotions.

Grief is part of the healing process, but prolonged distress or harmful coping (such as substance use or isolation) may increase the risk of anxiety or depression. If you are concerned about yourself or someone else, consider seeking support from a healthcare or mental health professional.

