



Grief and Loss

There are many things that can cause us grief, such as divorce, job loss, illness or loss of a loved one. Grief often comes in waves of sorrow that taper off only as the cycles of healing occur. Recognizing that process and allowing it to happen will help you endure and even grow during this sad experience. This cycle of healing doesn't always happen in the same order, and some parts might occur more often than others, but all are a natural part of grieving. Remember that this process is normal and that it helps to seek support.

- Initial shock: an intense emotional experience that could leave you feeling emotionally paralyzed.
- Emotional release: a time often characterized by crying, weeping or deeply sad feelings.
- Loneliness and depression: a sense of loss. The depth depends on how dependent you were on the person/people/things involved.
- Guilt: second-guessing yourself—"I could have done more" or "I should have done something differently."
- Anger, blame, hostility: "Why did they do this to me?" "Why did God do this to me?"
- Depression: an overwhelming sense of apathy and feeling like you can't get on with life.
- Recognition of loss: understanding what you lost. For example, maybe you didn't just lose a job but your income, position and self-esteem.
- Thankfulness: if you lost a loved one, appreciating the good memories and that person's life.
- Return to hope: "Life will go on," "I can cope," or "God will help me get through this."
- Return to normalcy: accepting the loss and adjusting to it.

The Bible says, "Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). God wants to bear our heartaches and losses and give us His comfort, hope and encouragement. When you accept Christ as your Lord and Savior, He will carry you through your grief.

It's also helpful to talk to God and to others about how you feel so you don't bury what's inside. Expect God to bring good out of the situation, too. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him." Reading your Bible and praying to God will also help you through this tough time.