

Steps of the Grieving Process

Caution: These are a reference tool only! Stages of grieving are individual. Can affect the survivor and family members, friends.

5 Steps:

1. Denial

Allows time to find a better strategy "this can't be happening to me". No crying. Not accepting or even acknowledging the loss.

2. Anger

Comes after denial stops working, "why me?" feelings of wanting to fight back or get even, considered a step forward.

3. Bargaining

Trying to take control, attempting to make deals with God, family, therapists, etc. to stop or change the loss.

4. Grieving Depression

Clients realize the loss is real and permanent, overwhelming feelings of hopelessness, frustration, bitterness, mourning, feel a lack of control, can last a very long time.

5. Acceptance

Eventually, most people get there, acceptance is the goal of the grieving process, there is a difference between resignation and acceptance. Try to accept the loss, not just try to bear it quietly.

These steps have been critiqued for being artificial...that opinion may have some truth to it.

It is rare to ever be at *one* step; generally people are at some kind of transition stage between steps.

The steps will not always happen sequentially, it is common to move back and forth between steps.