

Dark

paralyzed

I can't eat.
I eat too much.
I can't sleep.
I sleep too much.

depression.

Lonely..

TIRED OF
FEELING
TIRED

SAD

DEPRESSION

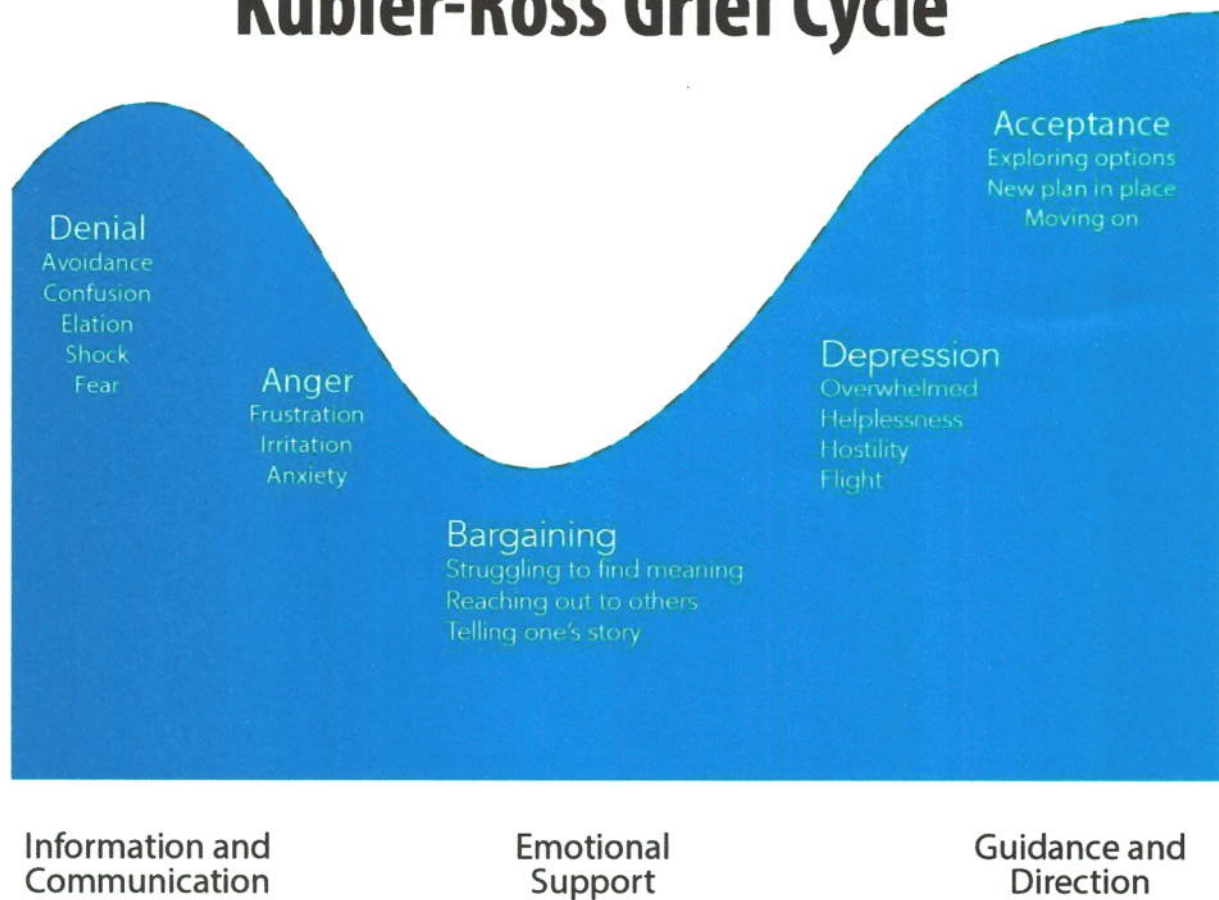
After bargaining, our attention moves squarely into the present. Empty feelings present themselves, and grief enters our lives on a deeper level, deeper than we ever imagined.

This depressive stage feels as though it will last forever. It's important to understand that this depression is not a sign of mental illness. It is the appropriate response to a great loss. We withdraw from life, left in a fog of intense sadness, wondering, perhaps, if there is any point in going on alone? Why go on at all?

Depression after a loss is too often seen as unnatural: a state to be fixed, something to snap out of. The first question to ask yourself is whether or not the situation you're in is actually depressing.

The loss of a loved one is a very depressing situation, and depression is a normal and appropriate response. To not experience depression after a loved one dies would be unusual. When a loss fully settles in your soul, the realization that your loved one didn't get better this time and is not coming back is understandably depressing. If grief is a process of healing, then depression is one of the many necessary steps along the way.

Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle





*Depression: "My sadness feels like a
bottomless pit."*

During our experience of processing grief, there comes a time when our imaginations calm down and we slowly start to look at the reality of our present situation. Bargaining no longer feels like an option and we are faced with what is happening.

We start to feel the loss of our loved one more abundantly. As our panic begins to subside, the emotional fog begins to clear and the loss feels more present and unavoidable.

In those moments, we tend to pull inward as the sadness grows. We might find ourselves retreating, being less sociable, and reaching out less to others about what we are going through. Although this is a very natural stage of grief, dealing with depression after the loss of a loved one can be extremely isolating.

8 Tips For Dealing with the Depression Stage of Grief

- **Give yourself permission to “feel your feelings”.** Don’t let anyone tell you how you should feel or that you should “get over it” or “move on”.
 - **Don’t try and suppress your grief.** In order to heal, you have to acknowledge your pain. Avoiding your grief on a long-term basis can lead to complications such as clinical depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and other health problems.
 - **Express your feelings to others.** This includes friends and family, church members, clergy, bereavement support groups, family physicians, or professional counsellors.
 - **Express your feelings in creative ways.** As examples: write a letter to your loved one telling her how much you miss her; keep a journal detailing how you feel; draw or paint pictures; create a photo album or scrapbook celebrating your loved one’s life; create a playlist of music that captures the spirit of your loved one; volunteer your time to a cause that was important to your loved one; or create a special and unique post for Facebook to let your online community how much you love and miss that person.
 - **Avoid negative behaviour that can harm your health.** For example: don’t try and numb your pain by abusing alcohol and prescription drugs.
 - **Set a small exercise goal each day.** For example: “Today, I will get out of bed and walk around the block once.” According to Dr. John Ratey, the author of *Spark*, scientific studies show that aerobic exercise significantly alleviates the symptoms of depression. In Britain, doctors now use exercise as a first-line treatment for depression, but exercise is vastly under-utilized in the United States.
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- **Plan ahead for grief “triggers”.** Holidays, anniversaries, birthdays, and other special dates and events reawaken memories and feelings. It is completely normal for you to revisit your grief during these times. If a significant date or event is approaching, anticipate that you will struggle emotionally. Ask your family and friends for support beforehand, and work with them to create strategies to help you cope during this time, as well as to help you honor the person you loved.
- **See a medical doctor** if the pain of your loss is so constant and severe that it keeps you from resuming your life, or if you have suicidal thoughts. Only a medical doctor is able to appropriately diagnose and treat grief and depression that is beyond what is considered “normal” —referred to as “complicated grief” and “clinical depression”.

BE THERE

Listening, supporting, encouraging, and just being there can really make a difference in a friend's life. Here are some ways to help a friend deal with grief & loss.

THINGS TO REMEMBER...

- ❖ There's no "right way" to grieve
- ❖ People don't "get over" a loss, but rather they find a way to accept and live with the loss
- ❖ There's no time limit for grieving
- ❖ Anniversaries of the event can trigger memories and intense feelings
- ❖ Loss can trigger a variety of emotions beyond sadness

BE THERE FOR YOUR FRIEND BY...

- ❖ Being responsive to whatever they need from you at the moment
- ❖ Listening to their thoughts and feelings about their loss
- ❖ Allowing them to cry and express their emotions
- ❖ Offering specific things you can do for them rather than waiting for them to ask (e.g., bringing them food, running errands, getting notes from class, etc.)
- ❖ Supporting their efforts to maintain healthy eating, sleeping and exercise habits
- ❖ Continuing to check up on them over time
- ❖ Directing them to resources to help them (e.g., offering to call or walk them to the Counseling Center [x5005] or the College Chaplain [x5082])

Lafayette College Counseling Center, x5005
Bailey Health Center—2nd Floor

<http://sites.lafayette.edu/bethere/>
<http://counselingcenter.lafayette.edu>

The Best Things to Say to Someone in Grief

1. I am so sorry for your loss.
2. I wish I had the right words, just know I care.
3. I don't know how you feel, but I am here to help in any way I can.
4. You and your loved one will be in my thoughts and prayers.
5. My favorite memory of your loved one is...
6. I am always just a phone call away
7. Give a hug instead of saying something
8. We all need help at times like this, I am here for you
9. I am usually up early or late, if you need anything
10. Saying nothing, just be with the person

The Worst Things to Say to Someone in Grief

1. At least she lived a long life, many people die young
 2. He is in a better place
 3. She brought this on herself
 4. There is a reason for everything
 5. Aren't you over him yet, he has been dead for awhile now
 6. You can have another child still
 7. She was such a good person God wanted her to be with him
 8. I know how you feel
 9. She did what she came here to do and it was her time to go
 10. Be strong
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Depression can be hard to talk about. But if a friend or loved one is depressed, having a conversation about getting help can make a big difference. Use these tips to start talking.

Show you care.

- "How are you feeling? I'm here to listen to you and support you."
- "I'm concerned about you. I think you may need to talk to someone about depression. I want you to get the help you need to feel better."
- "Let me tell you all the things I love about you."
- "I'd really like to spend more time with you. Let's take a walk, grab something to eat, or go to a movie."

Offer hope.

- "You're not alone. Many people suffer from depression – it's nothing to be ashamed of."
- "Depression can be treated. Getting help is the best thing you can do."
- "Most people get better with treatment – even people who have severe depression."
- "There are different ways to treat depression, including therapy and medicine. Getting more physical activity might also help you feel better."

Offer to help.

- "Let me help you figure out what's going on. You can start by making an appointment with your doctor – or I can help you find someone else to talk to, like a counselor, therapist, or social worker."
- "I can give you a ride to your therapy appointment or remind you to take your medicine."
- "You can call or text me at any time if you need support – or if you just want to talk."

Major depression

Pervasive loss of interest or pleasure

Pervasive dysphoric mood across situations

Preoccupation with low self esteem; general sense of guilt or shame

General withdrawal from activities and people

Intrusive images are not prominent

Yearning and longing not usually seen

Acute grief

Loss of interest or pleasure related to missing loved one

Pangs of emotion triggered by reminders of loss

Preoccupation with the deceased; guilt and self blame focused on death

Avoidance of activities, situations and people because of the death

Intrusive images of the deceased are common

Yearning and longing are frequent

If your symptoms of depression are causing problems with relationships, work, or your family -- and there isn't a clear solution -- you should see a professional.

Talking with a mental health counselor or doctor can help prevent things from getting worse, especially if your symptoms stay for any length of time. It's important to understand that feeling depressed doesn't mean you have depression. Depression involves not only changes in mood, but also changes in sleep, energy, appetite, concentration, and motivation. If you have physical symptoms like these and find yourself feeling depressed much of the time for days or weeks, see your doctor.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).”

SAMHSA's National Helpline, [1-800-662-HELP \(4357\)](tel:1-800-662-HELP(4357)), (also known as the Treatment Referral Routing Service) or TTY: [1-800-487-4889](tel:1-800-487-4889) is a confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations. Callers can also order free publications and other information.

The bravest thing I
ever did was
continuing my life
when I wanted to
die.



During these uncertain times, it can be more difficult to deal with the grieving process. Many things can be triggers, causing you to sink into a deeper depression.

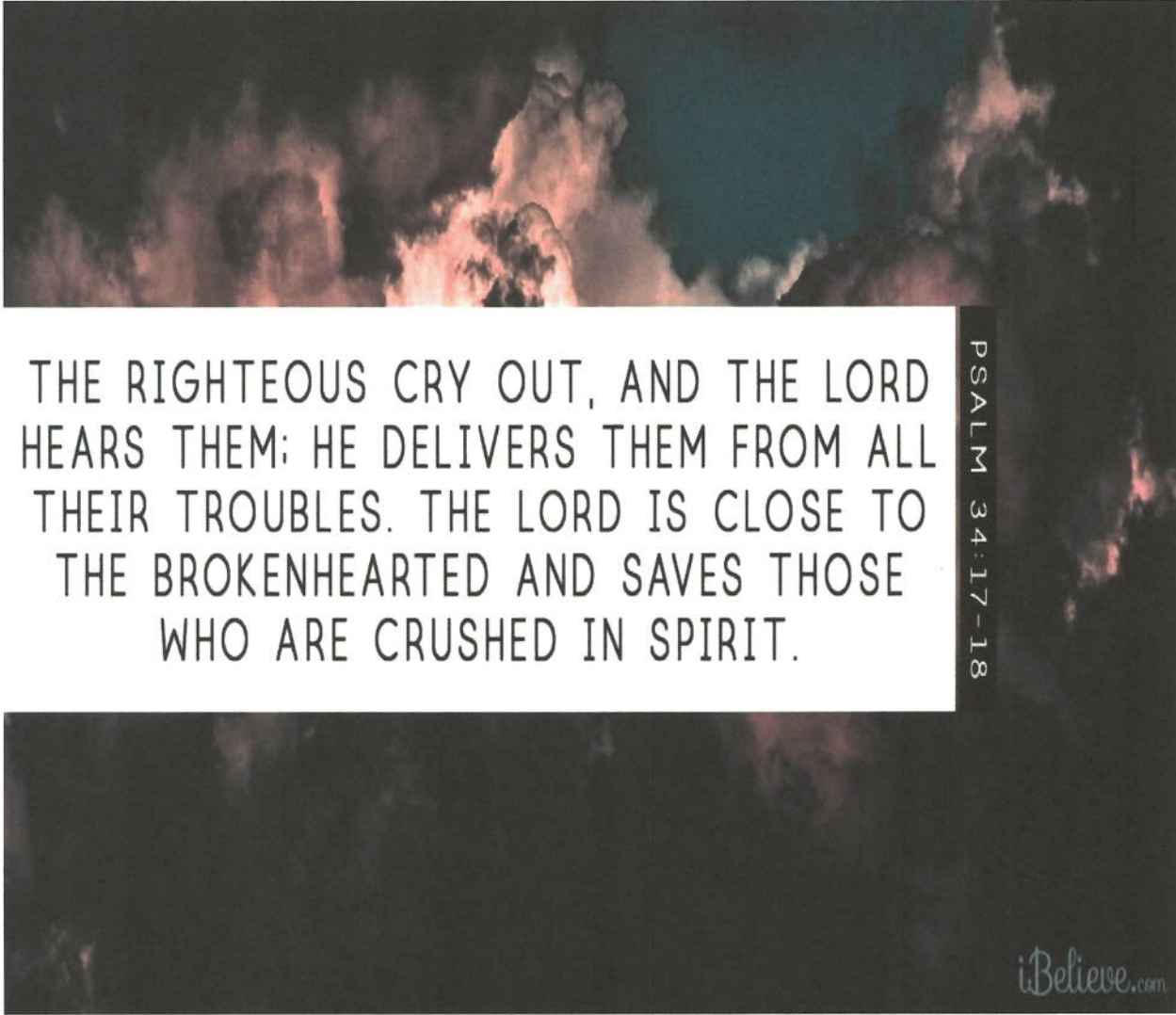
The country's unrest, the rioting, the loss of yet another black person UNLAWFULLY can set your mind back to your own loss. As a parent that has lost a child you can find yourself thinking about your child! For me personally, when George Floyd called out his mother's name it made me think...did my son call my name? To someone who has lost a parent, you can find yourself stepping into the shoes of his children and remembering how you felt. If you have ever lost a sibling, you can find yourself reflecting on the pain of losing your brother or sister.

Things like the events unfolding around us can be damaging to your grief recovery process. These are the times when you have to hold on to your faith like never before! You have to lean on God's word! You have to pray without ceasing! **YOU HAVE TO ASK FOR HELP!!!**

Proverbs 12:25 says "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad." Now is the time to soak up that word! You don't have to endure this alone! "Casting all your care upon him", the Lord is there to listen!

Now let's be realistic here, if you are experiencing deep dark depression and are having thoughts of harming yourself, you need to seek professional help! The bible is the SOURCE but God also gives us RESOURCES!

I was listening to the radio and heard the perfect example on needing Jesus and therapy. (It spoke of drowning but due to my personal grief I changed the narrative).. "If I'm sinking in quicksand, I don't need you coming at me with an instructional manual on how to get out! I need you to get in it with me and HELP PULL ME OUT"! In my opinion, some things just require more than God alone! James 2:17 says "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Connect with someone that can, along with your faith and prayers, help pull you out of that sinking place! A bible based church (The City of Life Christian Church is an AWESOME!), a strong support system and, if needed, therapy can help you tackle the difficult stage of depression.



THE RIGHTEOUS CRY OUT, AND THE LORD
HEARS THEM; HE DELIVERS THEM FROM ALL
THEIR TROUBLES. THE LORD IS CLOSE TO
THE BROKENHEARTED AND SAVES THOSE
WHO ARE CRUSHED IN SPIRIT.

PSALM 34:17-18

iBelieve.com

A Prayer for Battling Depression

Lord God, life has become such a struggle and I find that my faith in You is being seriously challenged, but Lord, I know that Your Word says that You are there for me all the time, and that You would never leave me to struggle alone. Please help me to turn my thoughts to You every single time that this depression tries to descend upon me. Please bring to my mind those Scripture that tell the truth of Your love and grace.

Be with me Lord, at those times when doubts of Your love for me rise up in my mind, and help me to reaffirm in my heart all that You have done for me, throughout my life. When my faith is threatened by those negative thoughts that say that You could never love me, let me remember that You loved me so much that You died to save me and have clothed me in Your perfect righteousness.

When assurance in my salvation and eternal security starts to waver, help me to recall that You loved me so much that You sent Your only begotten Son to die for me and pay the price for all my sins and help me to reaffirm the truth in my heart. Thank You, Lord, for Your great love for me.

When I find myself wandering far from You and little murmurings rise in my heart, that You cant love me as much as other people because things are so difficult in my life, prevent me from dwelling on such lies which come from the pit, and help me dwell on You. You alone are good and gracious and faithful and true.

And Lord, when depression is set to invade my peace, help me to claim the promise that Your grace is sufficient for me, and help me to trust You in all things. Thank You, Lord, in Jesus' name I pray,

Amen.