

No one ever  
told me that  
grief felt so like  
**fear.**"

--C.S. Lewis

I'm unsure which pain is worse -  
the shock of what happened or  
the ache for what never will.

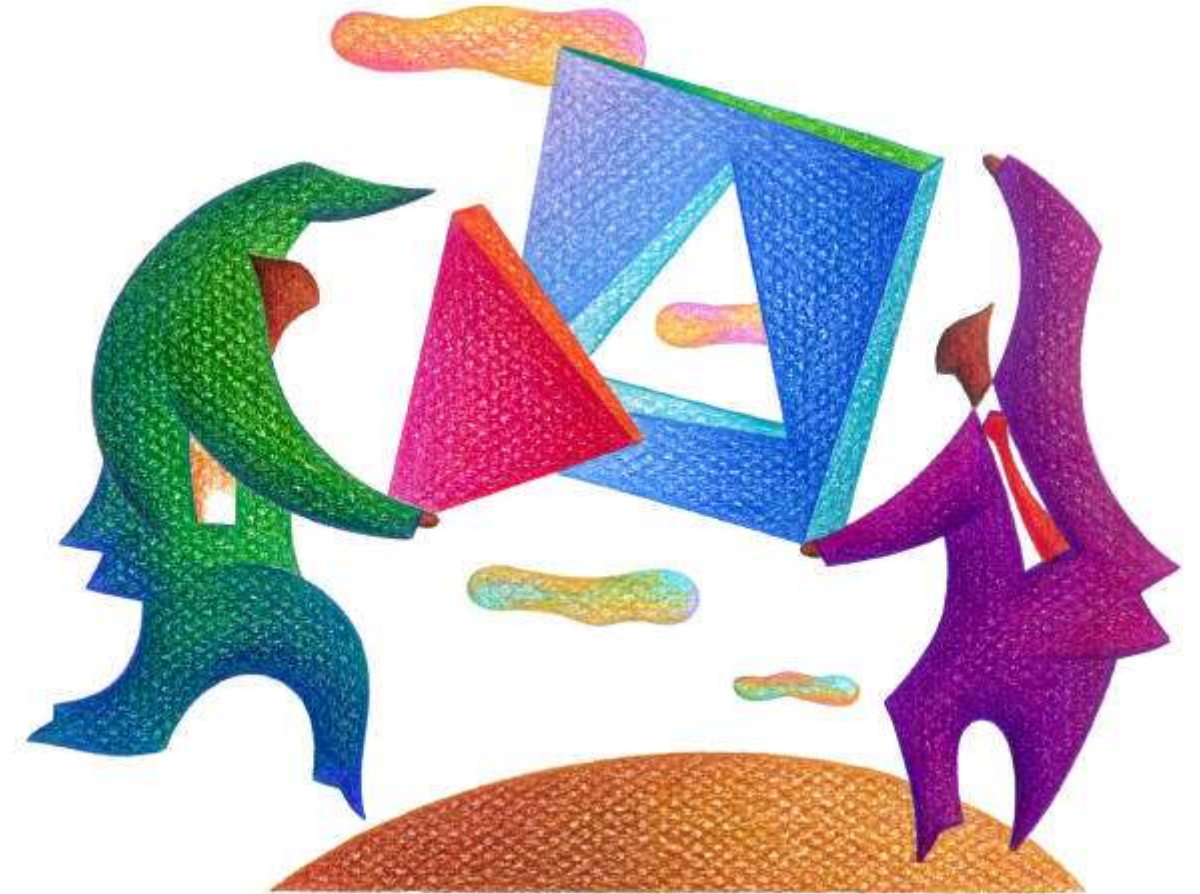
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# *The Trifecta: Grief Loss and Trauma*

## *Session 1: An Overview*

*Module 1*  
*March 21, 2023*

Angela Flack, MDiv  
Enid Walker Butler, MSG, CT



FAIRFAX COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF  
**FAMILY SERVICES**  
ADULT AND AGING



**LONGEVITY  
PROJECT**  
for a greater Richmond

# YOUR INSTRUCTORS

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# THE SERIES

1

Week 1

Death and Dying:  
The Good Death

*Session 1: An  
Overview*

*Session 2: Models of  
Care*

2

Week 2

The Trifecta: Grief  
Loss and Trauma

*Session 1: An  
Overview*

*Session 2: Practical  
Application*

3

Week 3

The Toolbox

4

Week 4

Leading the Way  
(For Supervisors)



# MIND DUMP

PARKING  
LOT

BE HERE  
NOW

Before we get started please take out a piece of paper. Draw a line down the center.

On the left side write Parking Lot. On the right side write Be Here Now.

On the *Parking Lot* side write down all the things swirling in your mind that you need to remember to do but not right now (shopping list, friends to reach out to). On the *Be Here Now* side write down the things that are on your mind about tonight's class (topics of interest, questions you have, ideas to share).

Take this moment to come into this learning space.



# Description of Part I Session



Everyone experiences grief and loss. Recently, attention has been given to the presence of grief, loss, and trauma within the workplace because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



These two sessions will review grief and loss theories including contemporary insights from leading experts.



We will use a variety of discussion platforms and brainstorming to apply these theories to experiences of working with older adults and their families.



Additionally, will explore the integration of these theories as they relate to trauma and resiliency.





# Objectives

- To learn and review theories of grief and loss
- To explore types of grief and loss.
- To explore the role of trauma in work-life balance
- To develop a common grief, loss, and trauma vocabulary
- Identify private and public rituals of remembrance for use within the workplace



# First Grief Experience

Please raise your hand so we can unmute your line OR use the Q&A tab to enter responses to the following questions–

What was your first grief experience?

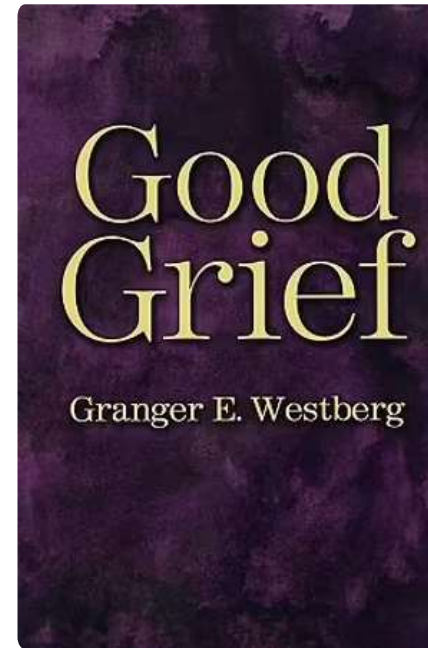
How old were you, did you go to the funeral/memorial?

What did the loss mean for you?

What/Who helped you through the loss?

What/Who was not helpful?

# Good Grief: Growing through Losses





The anguish experienced after significant loss, usually the death of a person (adapted, APA Dictionary of Psychology)

A deep and poignant distress, cause of such suffering, trouble, annoying or playful criticism, unfortunate outcome ([www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com))

A reaction to a major loss of someone or something. It is most often an unhappy and painful emotion  
([medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001530.htm](http://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001530.htm))

# Definitions: GRIEF





# Responses to Grief: Emotional

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Numbness

Isolation

Guilt

Sadness

Resentment

---

Emptiness

Fear

Shame

Despair

Shock

---

Loss-gain weight

Exhaustion

Nervousness

Anhedonia

# Responses to Grief: Psychological

---

Stomach problems

Crying

Empty Feelings

Heart Palpitations

Tension

---

Sleep disturbances

Sighing

Heavy-hearted

Physical anxiety

Shortness of Breath

---

Loneliness

Anxiety

Anger

Resistance

# DYNAMICS OF GRIEF

## INTERNAL FACTORS

Attachment history

Personal history of loss and death

Successive deaths/losses

Emotional complexity

Social Networks

## EXTERNAL FACTORS

Place of death

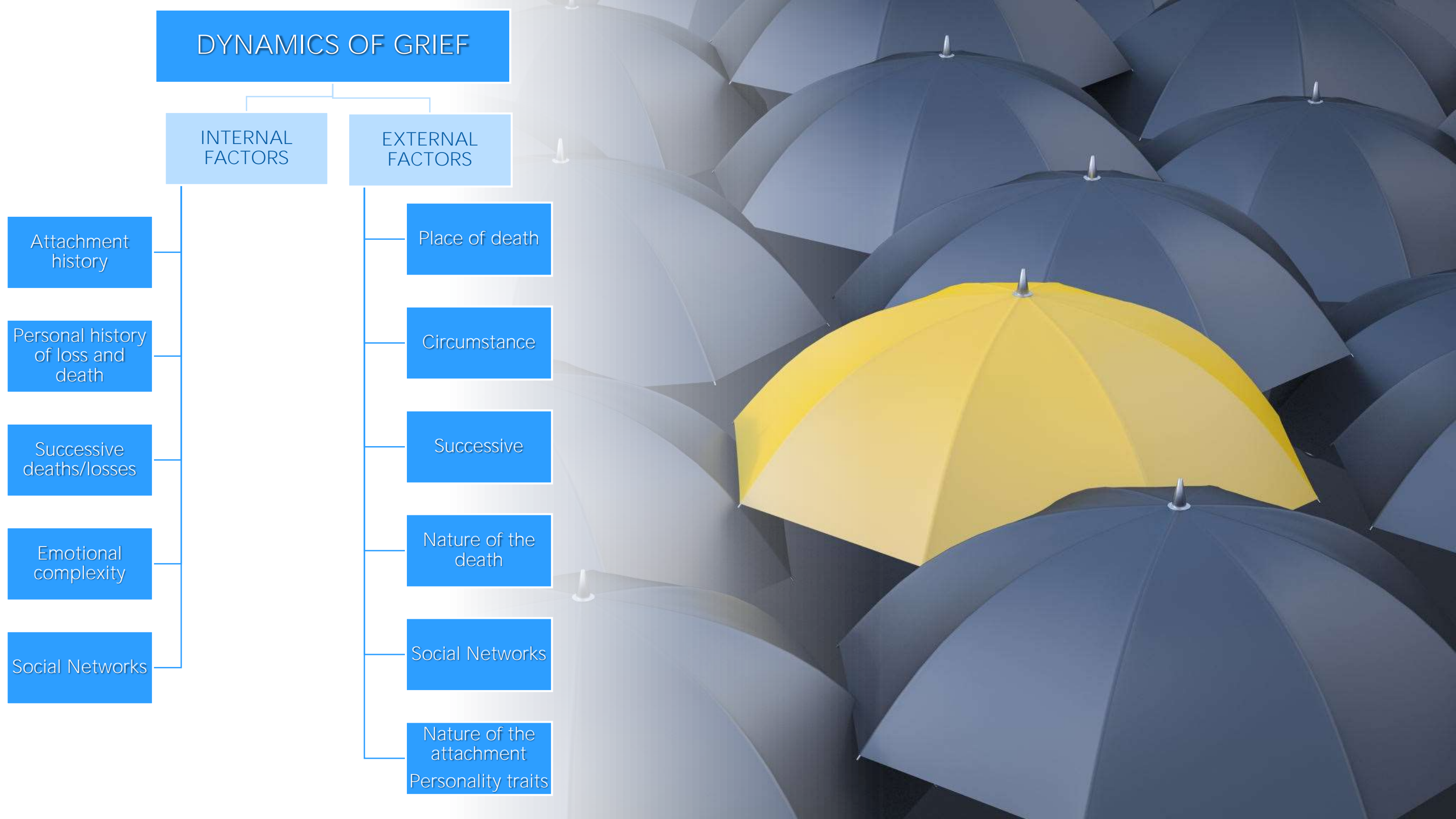
Circumstance

Successive

Nature of the death

Social Networks

Nature of the attachment  
Personality traits



# Several Theories of Grief

## Engel – Sequences of Grief (1964)

- Developing awareness
- Restitution (e.g., funeral)
- Resolving the loss
- Idealization
- Outcome (change/adaption, or none)

## Kubler-Ross - Grief Process (1969)

- Denial and Isolation
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance

## Bowlby-Parker- Greif Process (1980)

- Phase of numbness
- Phase of yearning and searching
- Phase of disorganization and despair
- Phase of reorganization

## Worden – Steps of Mourning (1991)

- Accept the reality of the loss
- Experience the pain of the grief
- Adjust the environment and reinvest in relationships
- Emotionally relocate the deceased and move on

## Parks-Weiss – Three Tasks for Recovery from Grief (1983)

- Intellectual recognition and application of the loss
- Emotional acceptance
- Assumption of new identity





# Some Thoughts on Shock

Stunned, dazed,  
zombie or robot  
behavior

Psychic numbing:  
Feeling frozen/cold,  
empty, nothing, small,  
smaller, & smaller, put  
to sleep, numb –  
without feelings

**Confused, can't make**  
decisions

Denial

# Remember This About Shock

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- Emergency Reaction
- Acts as a cushion
- Varying lengths of time
- Not a time for big decisions
- Returns throughout the grief process
- Acceptance in head and heart
- ONCE THE SHOCK LEAVES, THE PAIN COMES

Living With Loss by Jill Riethmeyer





## Denial Statements

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Oh no, this is a mistake, No, it's not true

---

You have the wrong person

---

Are you sure?

---

How do you know?

---

I just saw them/ They will be home soon

---

It happens to lots of people - its no big deal

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# Why Anger Comes During Grieving

- **Regrets (Would've, Could've, Should've)**
- Fairness
- Feeling helpless/powerless
- Need to blame
- Never be the same again
- Abandoned by the loss
- See others who have what I lost
- Isolation or punished
- You are so strong

# Group Exercise

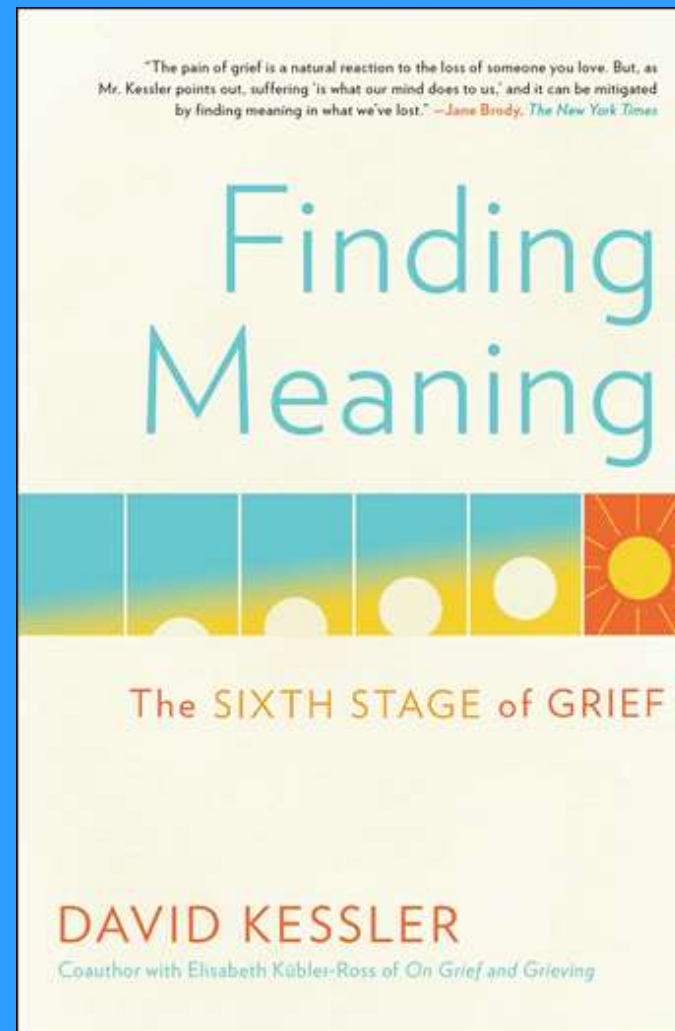
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What are accepted or appropriate ways to express anger?

Please use the Q&A tab to respond.

# Kubler-Ross and Kessler\*\* Grief Process (1969 & 2022)

Denial and Isolation  
Anger  
Bargaining  
Depression Acceptance  
\*\*Finding Meaning



Why is  
Finding  
Meaning so  
Important?

# The Importance of Meaning

Many people look for “closure” after a loss. Kessler argues that it’s finding meaning beyond the stages of grief most of us are familiar with—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance—that can transform grief into a more peaceful and hopeful experience.



# Kessler's Thoughts on Meaning

Meaning is relative and personal, only you can find your own meaning.

Meaning takes time. You may not find it until months or even years after a loss.

Meaning doesn't require understanding. It's not necessary to understand why someone died in order to find meaning.

The "why" you must answer is not why your loved one died, but why you lived.

Why are you here? What meaning can you bring to the rest of your life? What meaning can you find in those who are living?

Even when you do find meaning, you will not feel it was worth the cost of losing your loved one.

When we can find meaning, we are able to move forward in our grief and not become stuck.

Find gratitude for the time we had with loved ones

Find gratitude for the support others are giving you

Realize the shortness of life, the value of our life – life **doesn't always last as long** as we want

Create a change in your life to honor loved one, transformation of your life can bring meaning to theirs

Honor and show love for those still in your life, making the most of relationships still in your life

Do something that honors them, such as the way you live your life, treating others as they did, or being more present for others who are grieving

Find ways to commemorate their life (small or big)

Create a foundation, movement, or project in their honor



## Recap

- Definition
- Stages
- Responses
- Dynamics

Material loss

Relationship loss

Intrapsychic loss

Functional loss

Role loss

Community  
or Institutional  
loss

Abnormal Grief

Disenfranchised Grief

Complicated Grief

# Types of Grief & Loss

# Definitions: Loss

- the fact of no longer having something or having less of it than before
- earns less money (business loss)
- the feeling of sadness you experience when someone or something you like is taken away from you

Synonyms: damage, cost, injury, hurt

<https://www.apa.org/news/apa/2020/grief-covid-19>

# CHARACTERISTICS OF LOSS

Loss is a SEPARATION something/someone we desire

Loss is a THREATENING situation

Loss INVADES all areas of our lives

Each person deals with loss in his/her UNIQUE, individual way

Loss does not DISCRIMINATE

Loss is UNPREDICTABLE

Current important events can TRIGGER an old loss

Loss makes us feel VULNERABLE

Loss leaves us open to feelings of DEEP SADNESS, PAIN, & GRIEF

Loss means will NEVER BE EXACTLY THE SAME



# POLL

## Why are We afraid of Death and Grief?

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- ☐ I am uncomfortable talking about grief and loss
- ☐ I am comfortable talking about grief and Loss
- ☐ I don't know what to say...

# Types of Grief and Loss: Material Loss

The loss of physical object or of familiar surrounding to which one has an important attachment

Not Responsible for Stolen Items



<https://firesciencereviews.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40038-015-0008-4>



<https://www.tdi.texas.gov/column/my-car-was-totaled-now-what.html>

# Types of Grief and Loss: Relationship Loss

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The ending of opportunities to relate oneself to, talk with, share experiences with, and otherwise be in emotional and/or physical presence of a particular human being.



# Types of Grief and Loss:

## Intrapsychic Loss

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The experience of losing an emotionally important image of oneself, losing **the possibilities of “what might have been,”** abandonment of plans for a particular future, the dying of a dream.

Although often related to external experiences it is itself an entirely inward experience.





# Types of Grief and Loss: Functional Loss

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The loss of muscular or neurological functions of the body

sight

hearing

stroke/brain injury

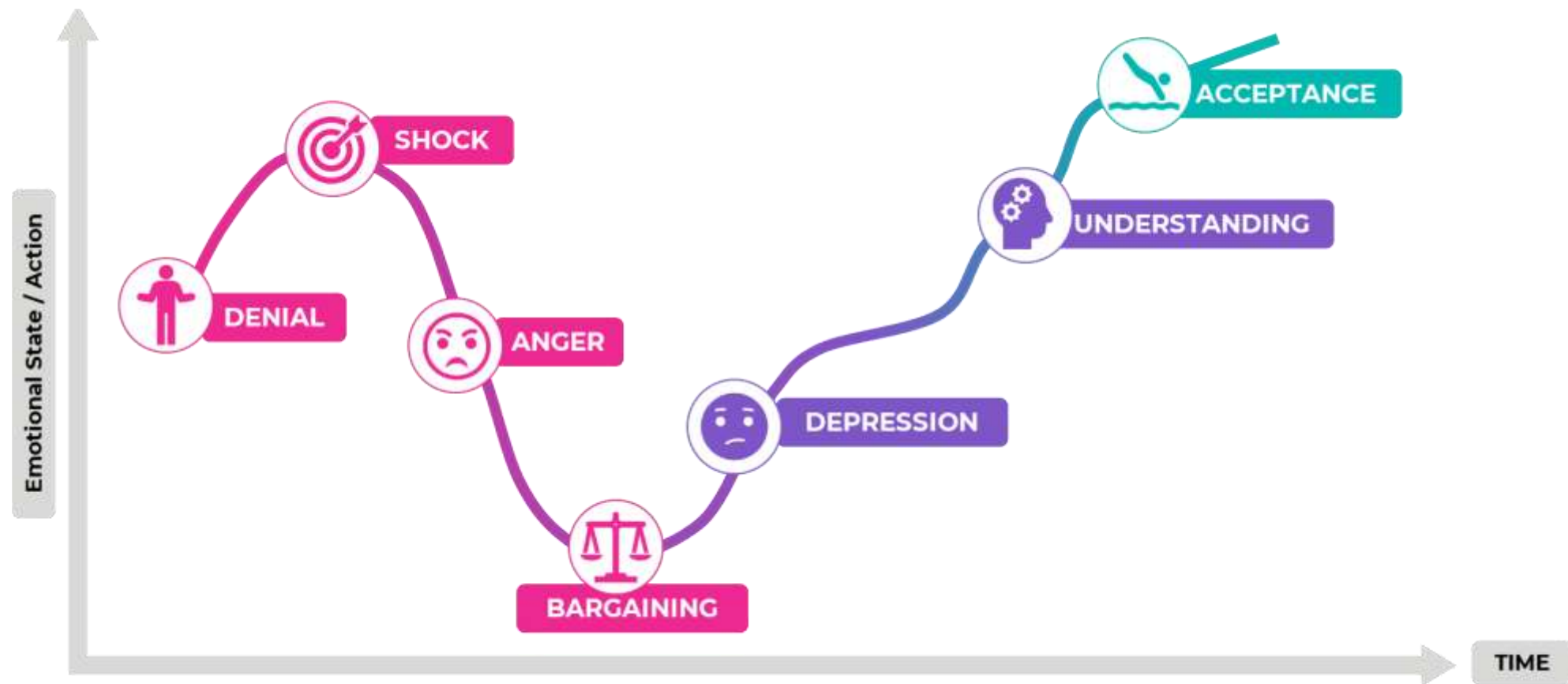
wheelchair

ADL

accident/disease

# Types of Grief and Loss: Role Loss

The loss of a specific role or of one's accustomed place in a social network is experienced as a role loss



<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/psychology/job-change-and-the-grief-cycle-the-effects-losing-our-job-or-changing-work-role>

<https://psychology-spot.com/pain-for-the-loss-social-role/>

# Types of Loss: Systemic/Community/Institutional

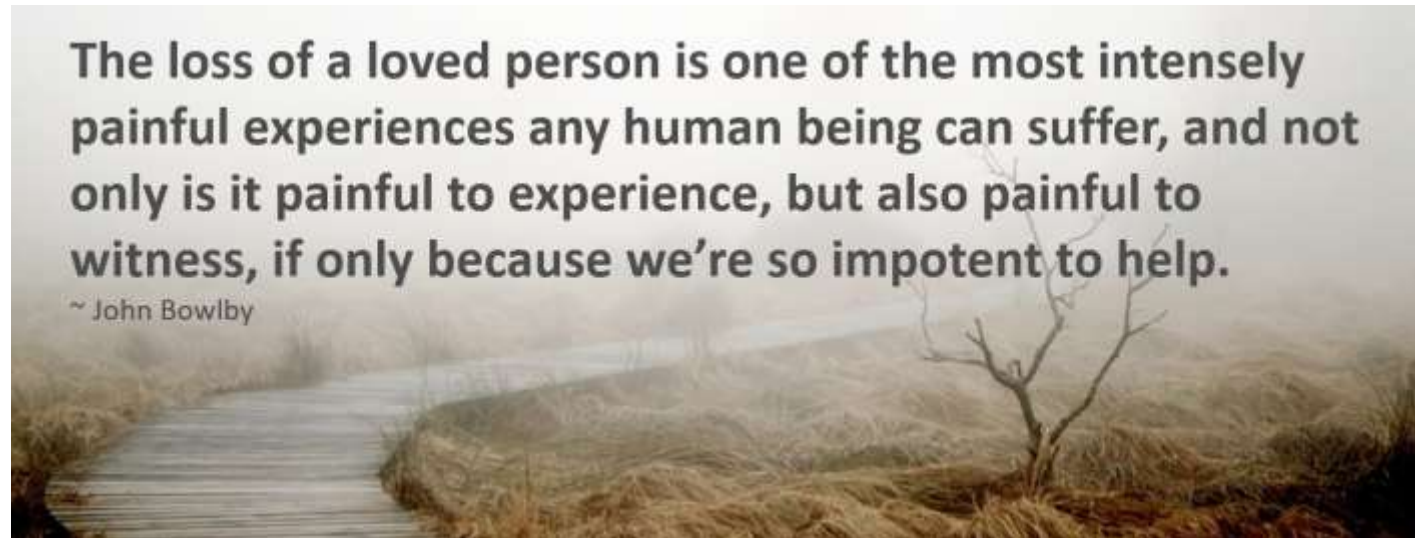
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The loss which occurs leaving a whole group of people who are non-family to grieve.

**The loss of a loved person is one of the most intensely painful experiences any human being can suffer, and not only is it painful to experience, but also painful to witness, if only because we're so impotent to help.**

~ John Bowlby





# Types of Grief and Loss: Complicated Grief and Loss

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A chronic impairing form of grief brought on by interference with the healing process.

Prolonged Grief Disorder - DSM-5-TR (2022)





# Types of Grief and Loss: Disenfranchised Grief

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Grief that is not usually openly acknowledged, socially accepted or publicly mourned.

Examples: loss of a pet, perinatal losses, elective abortions, loss of person who is not family or friend

<https://www.fhpcc.com/disenfranchised-grief>





# Recap

Types of Grief





# Modes of Helping

- Listening – without interrupting, judging, comparing, or bringing up your own problems
- Supporting – give the time/space for recognition and rehearsal of **one's feelings**
- Intervention – give time and space for relief from the expectations of others
- Remembrance – support the task of reviewing and creating a cherishable memory
- Reintegration – coming back together in the new space, one without that which was lost



# Help for the Grieving Person

Be present

Be a good  
listener

Be patient

Reassure

Support  
rituals

Use the  
deceased  
name

Validate the  
grief

Redirect the  
need to  
compare

Provide  
referrals and  
resources

# The 11 Commandments of Grief

1. Take time to accept death. (Feel the pain.)
2. Take time to let go.
3. Take time to make decisions.
4. Take time to share. (Talk about the sorrow.)
5. Take time to forgive.
6. Take time to practice self-compassion.
7. Take time to prepare for special occasions.
8. Take time to meet new friends.
9. Take time to laugh.
10. Take time to get help
11. Take time to give/create a new life.