

## *We are here...*

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If you are holding this brochure, it is likely that you have received some difficult news recently. Losing a loved one is always hard.

At Christian Formation Ministries we are aware that some times you just need to be with others. If you need to sit down and talk to someone about how you are feeling, please contact us and we will set up a time. If you are not in our area, we may be able to help you find someone where you are. You do not have to be alone.

## *Stuck with Guilt*

“I feel guilty if I have a good day”

“I feel guilty if I laugh or feel happy”

We are going to have bad days but they should not become our memorial to them.

Grave stones are wonderful and appropriate but we want to do more.

In generations past our ancestors wore black for a season and more recently black arm bands.

We have been giving black lapel or collar ribbons to be worn for a season.

We suggest that you set a time limit on what ever personal memorial you choose to do.

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**Christian Formation Ministries**

**WE ARE  
SORRY FOR  
YOUR LOSS**



**GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT**

## A LOOK AT THE SEVEN STAGES OF GRIEF AND LOSS

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Each of us experiences grief in unique ways, but it is good to know that there are some things we have in common. Each of us express our grief differently, but each expression is important and valid.

It is important to our own health and well-being that we deal with our loss. This is especially true for those of us who are in recovery from addiction. If we do not process our grief, we will go back to what we know. For many of us, unresolved grief may be a contributing component of our addictive behavior.

This chart is a simplified way to look at how most people experience grief. You may not neatly progress through each stage. You may go back and forth. There is no set time table for this process, and there is no such thing as a wrong way to experience it. However, it is important to go through it and seek help if we get stuck.

As we approach acceptance and recovery, the following suggestions may help.

Celebrate the loved ones life, not their death.

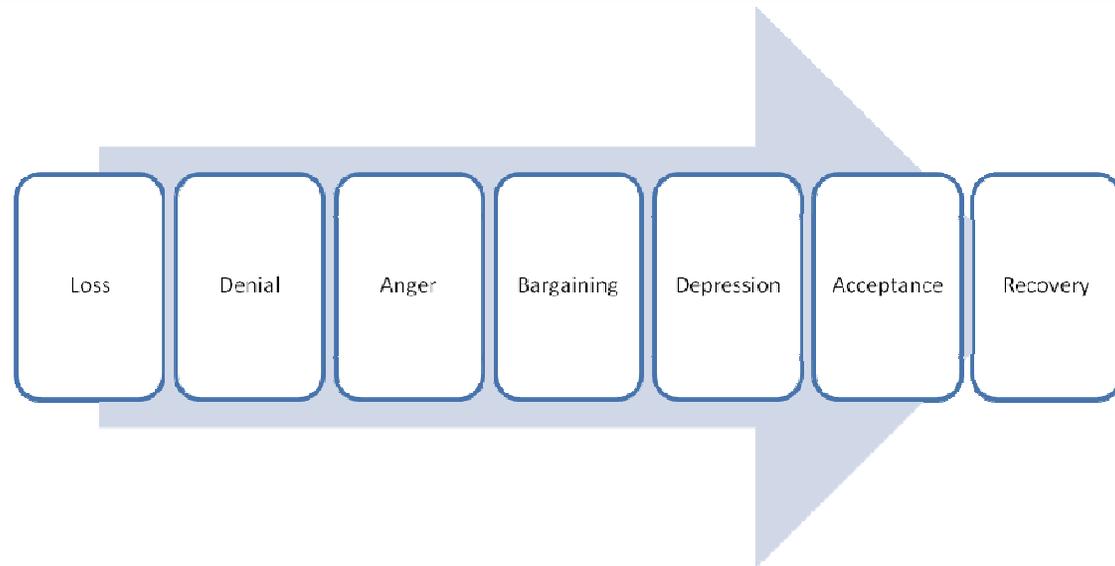
As soon as you are able, start to enjoy the good memories.

Find someone who is comfortable with talking about the one you lost and talk about these things.

Give yourself permission to cry or weep.

Give yourself permission to laugh.

Give yourself permission to return to Joy



**Loss**-is the experience or trauma of losing someone or something important to us. Our sense of loss may often be related to who we are, and how we see ourselves; it can be something that makes up our identity.

**Denial**-our first emotional response is denial; we find it hard to realize that our loss has happened, or we pretend that our loss doesn't really matter.

**Anger**-our second emotional response is anger. We may be angry that who we loved, or what we relied on, has been taken away from us.

**Bargaining**-next, we may attempt to set up conditions under which we will "be okay" with the loss.

**Depression (Deep Sadness)**-this is not a clinical depression. In this emotional stage, we blame ourselves for our loss, or we dwell on regrets we have as a result of our loss.

**Acceptance**-when we reach this emotional stage, we are at peace with the reality of our loss. At this point, our loss becomes a part of who we are, but does not weigh us down any longer.

**Recovery**-when we have reached this phase, our bodies and our emotions can begin to recover from the stress that began with the loss.

### *You are OK*

The emotions and pain you are feeling are normal.

The amount of pain we experience is proportional to how much of our identity is wrapped up in the person we lost.

You may doubt your ability to go on with life.

You may wonder why and not find an answer.

You are normal.