

Grief in a Time of COVID-19

What causes grief? Most people think of grief as being caused by the death of a loved one, but this is only partially correct. **Grief is caused by loss**, and loss comes in many forms.

In the current crisis you may be losing:

- Sense of safety
- Normal routine
- Faith (in God, in government, in humanity)
- Money
- Important life roles (job, volunteer positions, family roles)
- Important plans and milestones (weddings, graduations, birthday celebrations, vacation)
- Social interactions
- Time with friends or family
- Sense of control
- Sense of certainty

You've probably heard about the stages of grief:

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Depression
4. Bargaining
5. Acceptance

These aren't necessarily linear, and in the current situation, when there are so many different things to grieve, you may feel "all over the place" in terms of your grieving process. What's more, because of the uncertainty and fluidity of the current situation, it's hard to reach acceptance. **How can we learn to accept something when we don't know for sure what it is?**

The key here is to accept that uncertainty itself. **We must try to accept that we don't know what we are going to have to accept.** Once we let go of the expectation that we know what is coming, we can return our attention to focusing on the here and now.

There are no rights or wrongs in grief. Every day you get through is a you're your are a grief survivor. You can help yourself by not being angry at your feelings. Whatever is coming up for you is what some part of you needs to deal with. **The more you can acknowledge that you are both grieving and surviving your grief, the better off you will be.**