

Hello, everyone,

Thanks to all who attended the September meeting of Suddenly One. We had about 30 people in attendance, a record so far. I'm happy to see so many back again and meet the new members. If you missed this meeting, I hope you'll consider returning next month.

I have reworked the membership list and the email list. Please look at the member list closely and check me for errors. Some people said they weren't getting emails from me, so I hope that's been fixed. For the people who don't have email addresses, Ingrid will deliver this message to your home. If you don't want to return to the group, please let me know, and I'll remove you from the list, but I hope this won't be the case.

September's meeting was a little different from the first two meetings. Ingrid Crane began by leading us in a relaxation/breathing exercise to center us and bring us into focus. I hope everyone who participated felt relaxed and refreshed. Many thanks, Ingrid, for sharing your lifestyle practices with the group.

The "business" part of the meeting was brief.

- I'm trying to keep a current and accurate membership roster. If your information is incorrect, please let me know.
- Some members had asked if the group could meet more than once a month. Rather than have two or more meetings in the card room each month, we will try to plan at least one group outing each month so we have more opportunity to socialize. I realize not everyone will be able to attend every outing, but we'll try to make it as convenient as possible for everyone to get a chance to do something. It could be as simple as lunch together, or maybe a day trip somewhere. If you have ideas, please pass them along.
- We are continuing to compile a list of trusted vendors that we are comfortable recommending to others who can help with handyman chores, lawn or auto maintenance or other things we need someone else to do. If you have someone in mind, please pass the information to me via reply email, text, or bring it to the next meeting.
- Wreaths Across America will distribute wreaths to Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell on December 18th. There is a signup sheet for those who would like to volunteer to help with this. If you cannot volunteer but would like to sponsor a wreath, you can do that on their website: www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org. You can choose to have the wreath delivered to a specific National cemetery.
- Keeping the suggestion box in the Card Room has been denied by the board. I will bring the box to each meeting or you may drop suggestions in my mailbox cubby. It's also okay to email, text or call me with ideas or concerns.
- The Ambassador Club is reinstating the White Elephant Sale, scheduled for Saturday, October 2 from 9-12 at the Palm Grove Club. I have reserved a table, so if anyone in the group has a few things they'd like to "recycle" but don't want to purchase a table, please let me know. I can pick them up a day or two before the sale and put them with my things. You'll have to let me know your asking price and if you want it back if it doesn't sell. There will be a donation box on site for unsold items.

Many thanks to Kathylee Johnson for her presentation on *The Five Stages of Grief* as developed by Elisabeth Kubler Ross, a Swiss-American doctor. She described the stages-Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance and how they could affect our everyday lives, and how we are probably going through any one of these stages at any given time. She provided a handout which explains the stages, and one that gives sources for grief counseling. If you didn't attend the meeting and want these handouts, please let me know and I'll get a copy to you.

The next meeting will be **Friday, October 8th at 10:30 in the Card Room.**

One more note. My apologies to some of the new members: I was not expecting so many first timers and I ran short on welcome packets. I'll give you one on your next visit if you'll just remind me. I'm also sorry that I didn't get much time to speak with you at this meeting. Thank you for coming, and I hope to see you next month.

That's it for this time. Feedback is welcome, so please share your thoughts, ideas or suggestions.

Shelley, 210-410-0090

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Five stages of grief

The **five stages of grief** model (or the **Kübler-Ross model**) postulates that those experiencing **grief** go through a series of five emotions: **denial**, **anger**, **bargaining**, **depression**, and **acceptance**. Although commonly referenced in popular culture, studies have not empirically demonstrated the existence of these stages, and the model is considered to be outdated, inaccurate,^[1] and unhelpful in explaining the grieving process.^{[2][3]}

The model was introduced by Swiss-American psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her 1969 book *On Death and Dying*,^[4] and was inspired by her work with terminally ill patients.^[5] Motivated by the lack of instruction in medical schools on the subject of death and dying, Kübler-Ross examined death and those faced with it at the University of Chicago's medical school. Kübler-Ross's project evolved into a series of seminars which, along with patient interviews and previous research, became the foundation for her book.^[6] Although Kübler-Ross is commonly credited with creating stage models, earlier bereavement theorists and clinicians such as Erich Lindemann, Collin Murray Parkes, and John Bowlby used similar models of stages of phases as early as the 1940s.^[7]

Kübler-Ross later noted that the stages are not a linear and predictable progression and that she regretted writing them in a way that was misunderstood.^[8] "Kübler-Ross originally saw these stages as reflecting how people cope with illness and dying," observed grief researcher Kenneth J. Doka, "not as reflections of how people grieve."^[9]

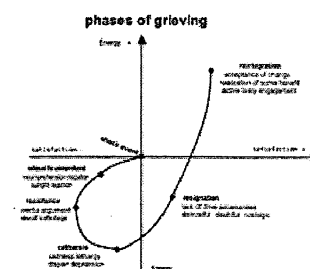
As of 2019, *On Death and Dying* has been translated into forty-one languages with the 50th anniversary edition being published by Simon & Schuster.

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Stages of grief

Kübler-Ross originally developed stages to describe the process patients with terminal illness go through as they come to terms with their own deaths; it was later applied to grieving friends and family as well, who seemed to undergo a similar process.^[10] The stages, popularly known by the acronym DABDA, include:^[11]

1. **Denial** – The first reaction is denial. In this stage, individuals believe the diagnosis is somehow mistaken, and cling to a false, preferable reality.
2. **Anger** – When the individual recognizes that denial cannot continue, they become frustrated, especially at proximate individuals. Certain psychological responses of a person undergoing this phase would be: "Why me? It's not fair!"; "How can this happen to me?"; "Who is to blame?"; "Why would this happen?".
3. **Bargaining** – The third stage involves the hope that the individual can avoid a cause of grief. Usually, the negotiation for an extended life is made in exchange for a reformed lifestyle. People facing less serious trauma can bargain or seek compromise. Examples include the terminally ill person who "negotiates with God" to attend a daughter's wedding, an attempt to bargain for more time to live in exchange for a reformed lifestyle or a phrase such as "If I could trade their life for mine".
4. **Depression** – "I'm so sad, why bother with anything?"; "I'm going to die soon, so what's the point?"; "I miss my loved one; why go on?" During the fourth stage, the individual despairs at the recognition of their mortality. In this state, the individual may become silent, refuse visitors and spend much of the time mournful and sullen.
5. **Acceptance** – "It's going to be okay."; "I can't fight it; I may as well prepare for it." In this last stage, individuals embrace mortality or inevitable future, or that of a loved one, or other tragic event. People dying may precede the survivors in this state, which typically comes with a calm, retrospective view for the individual, and a stable condition of emotions.



A diagram developed by Bertrand Grondin from a presentation of Kübler-Ross' ideas produced by France Telecom

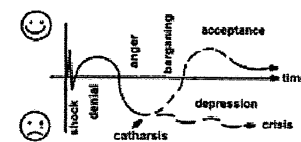


Diagram showing two possible outcomes of grief or a life-changing event

In a book co-authored with [David Kessler](#) and published posthumously, Kübler-Ross expanded her model to include any form of personal loss, such as the death of a loved one, the loss of a job or income, major [rejection](#), the end of a relationship or divorce, drug addiction, incarceration, the onset of a disease or an infertility diagnosis, and even minor losses, such as a loss of insurance coverage.^[8] Kessler has also proposed "Meaning" as a sixth stage of grief.^[12]

In 2020, during the [COVID-19 pandemic](#), Kessler applied the five stages to responses to the virus, saying: "It's not a map but it provides some scaffolding for this unknown world."

"There's denial, which we saw a lot of early on: This virus won't affect us. There's anger: You're making me stay home and taking away my activities. There's bargaining: Okay, if I social distance for two weeks everything will be better, right? There's sadness: I don't know when this will end. And finally there's acceptance. This is happening; I have to figure out how to proceed. Acceptance, as you might imagine, is where the power lies. We find control in acceptance. I can wash my hands. I can keep a safe distance. I can learn how to work virtually."^[13]

Criticism

Criticisms of this five-stage model of grief center mainly on a lack of [empirical research](#) and [empirical evidence](#) supporting the stages as described by Kübler-Ross and, to the contrary, empirical support for other modes of the expression of grief. Moreover, Kübler-Ross' model is the product of a particular culture at a particular time and might not be applicable to people of other cultures. These points have been made by many experts,^[3] including Professor Robert J. Kastenbaum (1932–2013) who was a recognized expert in gerontology, aging, and death. In his writings, Kastenbaum raised the following points:^{[14][15]}

- The existence of these stages as such has not been demonstrated.
- No evidence has been presented that people actually do move from Stage 1 through Stage 5.
- The limitations of the method have not been acknowledged.
- The line is blurred between description and prescription.
- The resources, pressures, and characteristics of the immediate environment, which can make a tremendous difference, are not taken into account

A widely cited 2003 study of bereaved individuals conducted by Maciejewski and colleagues at [Yale University](#) obtained some findings consistent with a five-stage hypothesis but others inconsistent with it. Several letters were also published in the same journal criticizing this research and arguing against the stage idea.^[16] It was pointed out, for example, that instead of "acceptance" being the final stage of grieving, the data actually showed it was the most frequently endorsed item at the first and every other time point measured;^[17] that cultural and geographical bias within the sample population was not controlled for;^[18] and that out of the total number of participants originally recruited for the study, nearly 40% were excluded from the analysis who did not fit the stage model.^[19] In subsequent work, Prigerson & Maciejewski focused on acceptance (emotional and cognitive) and backed away from stages, writing that their earlier results "might more accurately be described as 'states' of grief."^[20]

[George Bonanno](#), Professor of Clinical Psychology at Columbia University, in his book *The Other Side of Sadness: What the New Science of Bereavement Tells Us About Life After a Loss*,^[2] summarizes [peer-reviewed](#) research based on thousands of subjects over two decades and concludes that a natural [psychological resilience](#) is a principal component of grief^[21] and that there are no stages of grief to pass. Bonanno's work has also demonstrated that absence of grief or trauma symptoms is a healthy outcome.^{[22][23]}

Among social scientists, another criticism is a lack of theoretical underpinning.^{[3][24]} Because the stages arose from anecdotes and not underlying theoretical principles it contains conceptual confusion. For example, some stages represent emotions while other represent cognitive processes. Also, there is no rationale for arbitrary dividing lines between states. On the other hand, there are other theoretically based, scientific perspectives that better represent the course of grief and bereavement such as: trajectories approach, cognitive stress theory, meaning making approach, psychosocial transition model, two-track model, dual process model, and the task model.^[25]

Misapplication can be harmful if it leads bereaved persons to feel that they are not coping appropriately or it can result in ineffective support by members of their social network and/or health care professionals.^{[3][19]} The stages were originally meant to be descriptive but over time became prescriptive. Some caregivers dealt with clients who were distressed that they did not experience the stages in "the right order" or failed to experience one or more of the stages of grief.

Criticism and lack of support in peer-reviewed research or objective clinical observation by some practitioners in the field has led to the labels of *myth* and *fallacy* in the notion that there are stages of grief.^{[23][24][26][27]} Nevertheless, the model's use has persisted in popular news and entertainment media.

References

- O'Connor MF (October 2019). "Grief: A Brief History of Research on How Body, Mind, and Brain

HOW I LEARNED TO BE A GENUINE REALLY ADULT GROWN-UP IN 100 EASY LESSONS AND 100 DIFFICULT YEARS

by Linda Holland Glick

I figure that by the time I die of old age at 100, I should be an "adult" by then. A grown-up, or as I used to say, and still believe, a "groaned-up", criticizes and complains and kvetches about everyone and everything. They don't wear bright yellow galoshes and jump into puddles or wear itchy red wool mittens and build snowmen and forts. And the worst part is that they can't even remember that they ever did.

So why do I want to be a grown-up at all? They're serious, studious, stifling, sanctimonious, sacrificing, sarcastic, scolding, sane and safe while I am none of those. So why is my goal to be one of "them", when my life so far has been a race in the opposite direction?

I guess being alone for the first time forces me on that course now. And force is the right word for it, as I go kicking and screaming into that adult world. My days are filled with insurances and COBRAS, bereavement and bills, rather than _____. Now, what did I used to do all day? I remember working, which wasn't work because I loved it, and doing exactly what I wanted to do when I wanted to do it, with only a pause for chores.

Chore---"a hard or unpleasant task." I guess that makes living a chore at times. More often now than before. Before. I love the word "before". The past is over and complete and pleasant and good for the most part. My memory stifles the bad and polishes the good until it glows. My memories are buffed by red doily hearts and baby's sleeping breath, cotton-candy days and shooting star nights. The past can be anything you choose to remember. It's as good as it gets. Loyal dogs had no fleas, and memory people had no faults, only endearing idiosyncrasies.

Love and memories cuddle and cradle the remnants of a past life. Remember when's are toothless grins and shiny pennies, milk and cookies and peanut butter and jelly. They are the first breath and the first kiss. Never the last kiss and the last breath. Hellos are so much better than goodbyes and farewell forevers are really forever.

But I digress, as I so often do when it comes to chores. I've become an expert at doing much and accomplishing little. Chores are the "must dos", not the "want to's". I am now good at opening and preparing, heating and stirring. Not cooking.

Why is it worth the time and effort for two, but not for one? Dinner for two was music and candles and wine. It was crystal and china and conversation. For one, it's standing over the sink to eat or sitting by the TV. It's alone. It's lonely.

It doesn't have to be that way, I know, but it is that way for now. The past is good memories. The present is a gift you give yourself and thus called "present". The future is open. It is what I will make of it. Not shaped by others. No compromises or limits. But it is the unknown and scary and there are monsters out there. It's big and I have no hand to hold. The whole wide world fits into my dark closet with a boogeyman holding the handle. My room has a light switch, which is almost within my grasp.

Hopefully, as I grow up, I will really grow UP and turn my own light switch and control the darkness. Maybe that's what being an adult is really all about. Being a grown-up means pulling your own little red wagon and taking the training wheels off your Red Ryder bike. It means filling the car with gas and folding your own map, but it can mean you get to choose the route and speed and steer your very own course.

THE BEST SOMEWHERE

by Linda Holland Glick

Don't tell me it's not a place.
His eyes are the best somewhere
to live
to exist
to be.
Within them are rooms and caves
alcoves and chambers
secluded corners
and unreachable depths.
When those eyes gaze at me
bore through me
encompass and surround me
I am in my favorite place
my ever changing
ever lasting place.
My lover's eyes are sheltered
by wires of eyebrows
At times, dominated by those
steel-wool sentries
guarding the best somewhere.
The color of the iris is changeable
like the people reflected therein.
At times like the blue surrounding
and encompassing a baby--
a warm, comforting blue.
The protective covering of a fuzzy blanket.
Blue.
Cruel blue.
The blue of ice stabbing the day.
Or the welcoming blue of a kite-beckoned sky.
An inviting color -- serene
Blue.
A tattered dungaree blue
A storm-warning blue
A scary, keep away blue
A no-trespassing blue.
But the color is only a door
to the vastness within.
His eyes reflect his; soul
and my life
my love
my dreams.
There's room there to hide a lifetime.
To hide a life.
Mine.