



Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. A Swiss-American psychiatrist and pioneer of studies on dying people, Kübler-Ross wrote "On Death and Dying," the 1969 book in which she proposed the patient-focused, death-adjustment pattern, the "Five Stages of Grief." Those stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. This model is more recently used not just to understand the grief of someone dying, but used to understand the state of loss. Such as a relationship or something we have a significant emotional attachment to.

Denial

Initially, you may refuse to believe the relationship is over and feel numb which is a common reaction in the early days of a break-up. Some people initially carry on as if nothing has happened and from the outside people might perceive this as taking the breakup very well.

Anger

It is very natural to feel anger after a breakup. Ending a relationship can feel cruel or unfair, especially when you have invested so much time and let yourself be vulnerable with a person. You might have made many plans for the future together. It's also common to feel angry at yourself for things you did or didn't do before the break-up.

Bargaining

When we are in pain, it's sometimes hard to accept that there's nothing we can do to change things. Bargaining is when we start to make deals with ourselves, or perhaps with God if you are religious. We want to believe that if we act in particular ways, we will feel better. It's also common to find ourselves going over and over in our mind, about the things that happened in the past. We ask a lot of 'what if' questions and wishing that we could go back and change things in the hope things could have turned out differently.

Depression

Sadness and longing are what we think of most often when we think about grief. This pain can be very intense and come in waves over many months or years. Life can feel like it no longer holds any meaning which can be very scary.

Acceptance

Grief about the loss of a relationship can come in waves. It can feel like nothing will ever be right again. But gradually most people find that the pain eases, and it is possible to accept what has happened. We may never 'get over' the loss of someone precious, but we can learn to move forward and live again, whilst keeping the memories of the person we have lost.