

# Loss & Grief During COVID-19

## Definition of Grief

### Grief:

- A natural and normal process of learning to live with what you have lost.
- A response to loss of someone or something to which a bond has been formed.

– *The Oxford Dictionary*

## Grief can be:

- **Physical** – such as a loss of appetite.
- **Cognitive** – the inability to think clearly.
- **Behavioural** – acting out in ways that are not 'like you'.
- **Social** – withdrawal from social interaction.
- **Cultural** – withdrawal from observing traditional practices.
- **Spiritual** – withdrawal of observation of established religious practices.

## The Stages of Grief

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

– *Elizabeth Kubler-Ross*

## There are no rules to grief

- Grieving is not linear.
- There is no timeline to experiencing grief.
- There is no typical loss.
- There is no typical response.

Achieving Believing Belonging

## Step 1: Denial

- COVID-19 makes no sense.
- How did this happen?
- It's overwhelming to follow all these rules.
- We are in a state of shock; our lives changed within hours.

It's normal to ask questions and to think that this pandemic is not real.

## Step 2: Anger

- Why do I have to stay home?
- Why can't I see my friends?
- Why do I have to do e-learning?
- I don't want to do any of this.

Allow yourself to feel angry. It's okay.

## Step 3: Bargaining

- What can I do to make this go away?
- 'If only's'.

There is no one to bargain with. This reality does not stop us from wondering 'what if'.

## Step 4: Depression

- This is awful.
- I can't change what is going on; so, why try?
- Will I ever feel better?

It's okay to feel this way.

## Step 5: Acceptance

- This is not okay.
- People are sick.

My reality is that I can only do what I can: stay at home; wash my hands; don't touch my face; and practice physical distancing.

# Loss & Grief during COVID-19

## Definition of Loss

### Loss:

A feeling of grief when deprived of someone or something of value.

– *The Oxford Dictionary*

## Loss and COVID-19

- Our lives are disrupted.
- Our plans have been changed without our say.
- Our scripts are gone:
  - All school trips cancelled for this school year
  - Extra curriculums are cancelled
  - Maybe no Confirmation?
  - Maybe no graduation?

What else don't we know for sure?

## We Can't Control What Happens Next

Generally we like to control what will happen next in our lives. Whether it is as simple as skipping school tomorrow or going to the movies or a party with our friends.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 makes that impossible.

## Difficulties during COVID-19

- We miss our friends.
- Physical distancing is hard.
- Washing our hands is hard.
- Not touching our face is hard.
- Staying at home is hard.

## What Can Help?

Having hope helps. We experience hope by:

- Performing acts of kindness such as calling someone who is physically distancing or by helping someone take care of their yard.
- Being generous.
- By being kind and gentle.
- By practicing trust: trusting others to do the right thing.
- Talking, writing, journaling – “We’re all in this together”.

## We Will Get Through This!

Here are some other suggestions that might alleviate these feelings:

- Meditation
- Yoga
- Exercise
- Reading
- Virtual visits with friends and family

## Helpful Resources

- [Coping with the Stress of COVID-19: Survival Tips for Parents and Caregivers](#)
- [How to Support Student Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

