

OPTIMAL

A newsletter for wellness and improved wellbeing

About OPTIMAL

OPTIMAL is a monthly wellness newsletter developed and circulated by Sages & Scribes Consultants. It aims to inform, educate and improve the general wellbeing of readers by highlighting the essentials for improved mental health, and giving the rudiments on how to live a vibrant yet practical life .

More often than not, we experience loss in one form or another, which causes us to grieve. We all grieve differently, yet those deep feelings of loss are universal. Does it ever go away? How do we cope? How do we heal?

This issue delves into grief and how to cope with loss of something or someone loved.

Improve your wellness, optimize your wellbeing and enhance your lifestyle with OPTIMAL.

Sages & Scribes
CONSULTANTS



COPING WITH GRIEF

By Ven. Adelowo Adesina

Grief is a natural response — an emotionally painful reaction — to any kind of loss. Contrary to the general view that grief is connected with the loss of someone, especially a loved one, grief also happens at the loss of something valued. The more significant the loss, the more intense the grief is likely to be.

There are several ways in which we can experience grief. For instance, it could be at the loss of a job, the loss of marriage or a treasured relationship; or perhaps the loss of freedom, security, health, prospects of promotion, or even feelings of hopelessness for the future.

Most people will experience some form of loss at some point in their lives. Grief is universal, yet it is also

personal; people grieve in very different and personal ways.

The emotions associated with grief and grieving vary, and can very often be complex and complicated.

No matter how we look at it, grief is inevitable and will happen to us in one way or another. It is how we cope with it that really matters.

Grief is like the ocean,
it comes in waves,
ebbing and flowing.
Sometimes the water is
calm, and sometimes it
is overwhelming. All we
can do is learn to swim.

Vicki Harrison

Grief: Accepting the Unacceptable

Grief is the emotional suffering that is felt when something or someone loved is taken away. Often, the pain of loss can feel overwhelming, and one may experience all kinds of difficult and unexpected emotions - from shock or anger, to disbelief, guilt and sometimes, profound sadness.

Grief comes in stages. While there are consistent elements within each stage, the process of grieving looks different for everyone. Being aware of the grief stages and how they are uniquely experienced can increase compassion and self-understanding.

Grief In Stages

There are 6 stages of grief:

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance



There is no pain so great as the memory of joy in present grief.

Aeschylus



1. DENIAL. This is a survival or coping mechanism that allows one to take in the news and the shock of the loss and process it slowly.

At this stage, one does not want to live in or accept its reality. Denial is a way of initially coping with the loss and figuring out how best to survive and continue living. For instance, if one receives a letter of retrenchment at work, one may begin to work harder as if the letter was not real.

2. ANGER. After the denial, the pain causes one to be angry. One could ask: How can I be retrenched when I work so hard? Anger is necessary in grief as it helps with the healing process.

3. BARGAINING. At this stage, one becomes willing to do anything to prevent the loss that has already happened, by trying to re-establish some form of control based on false hope.

This stage is often characterized

by guilt, remorse and regrets – ‘if onlys’ and ‘what ifs’.

4. DEPRESSION. The reality has set in and one begins to come to terms with the loss. Some symptoms associated with the depression stage are numbness, deep-seated sadness, extreme tiredness, and the inability to move forward with life.

It is often advised to seek counsel at this stage, especially if one has feelings of hopelessness or possible suicidal thoughts.

5. ACCEPTANCE. Finally, one accepts the reality of the loss, coming to terms with it and gradually moving forward with life. For instance, the person lets go and begins to look for another job.

Finding meaning in grief is linked to hope.

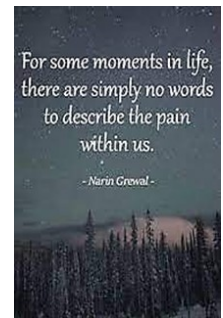
Signs And Symptoms

We tend to believe grief only happens with the loss of a loved one. In this case, the grief is justified and we can tell when someone is grieving. However, there are signs and symptoms that indicate when someone is grieving a loss. A person who has lost someone precious or something irreplaceable will feel grief.

The symptoms of grief, which could be physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual, include:

- Crying (sometimes unreasonably and uncontrollably), anxiety, guilt, anger, fatigue, frustration, fear, stress, as well as aches and pains.

You might know someone who has become somewhat withdrawn or unduly quiet. It could be this person is grieving a personal loss.



Lean On Me...

“Lean on me, when you’re not strong, and I’ll be your friend...”

Remember that song?

Supporting someone who grieves and being there for them may not be as easy as it seems. This is not the time to justify your ‘strength’ or the fact that you can overlook reality and trudge on with a straight face, nor is it the time to tell them what you think is right, or what you feel they ought to hear and do. This person is feeling a deep sense of loss and is in pain; they do not need to feel awkward, weak or judged.

It may just be better to keep silent; empathize quietly and allow them to grieve in whatever manner they choose to. Be the shoulder they need to lean on. Help them carry on.

***Grief is courage;
to keep stepping
through a life
that feels like it's
ended.***

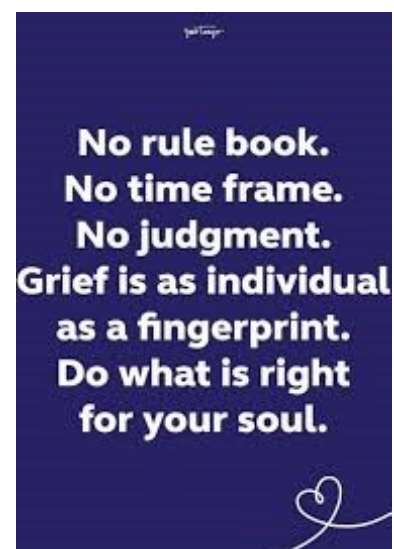
A Time to Grieve

Grieving is a process that requires acknowledging our feelings, and it is going to hurt. There's no way to avoid that pain; ignoring it will just make it worse.

The way we feel has a direct impact on our mental and physical health, so it's important to acknowledge our feelings instead of burying them and pretending we are fine when it is obvious we are not.

We need to acknowledge our grief—the pain for the loss we feel, because only then will we truly begin to cope and get through it. Be emotional and cry if you need to.

YOUR GRIEF IS AS UNIQUE AS
YOU ARE



How To Support The Grieving

Here are some ways to support someone who grieves:

- **Don't judge** or try to minimize their loss, pain or response to grief.
- **Learn to listen** more than you speak. Do not voice your opinion on the style of grieving. People grieve differently. Try not to hurt their feelings, or offend their sensitivity or sensibilities by judging what they say.
- **Don't try to stop them from crying**, as this is a way to release stored up emotions, hurt and pain. Just being there and offering a shoulder to lean on is immense support.
- **Lessen their burdens** by helping them. Run errands or do house chores where or if necessary. You may also give financial support.
- **Learn to respect the griever's wishes.** When visiting, allow them to lead the conversation and choose the topic they want to talk about. If they decide not to talk, respect their silence, and if they do, maintain confidentiality by keeping their secrets.
- **Ease their internal pain.** If it seems they are deeply affected by their grief, encourage them to go seek professional help in counselling or therapy.

Resources: helpguide.org, Kristen Rogers (2021), grief.com, doi.or, beyondbule.org, Wikipedia, verywellmind.com, Caitlin Stanaway (Phd),

*Grief is in two parts.
The first is loss.
The second is the
remaking of life.*

Anne Roiphe

In Other Words...

While grief and bereavement are inevitable, it is important that we do not allow its symptoms to linger due to its debilitating effects on our physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Life happens, we experience joy and also loss. Yet we know that where there is life, there is hope. And where there is hope, the possibilities are endless. Remember the good times past, smile, and look forward to the beauty of life ahead.

We can grieve, and yet not be lost in grief.

Be. Live. Overcome.



Sages & Scribes Consultants
5A Aderibigbe Shitta Street,
Maryland Estate, Maryland,
Lagos.

☎ +234 8034735875

✉ info@sagesandscribes.com

www.sagesandscribes.com

Sages & Scribes Consultants is a multi-disciplinary consulting firm with a mission to offer bespoke world-class consulting services to give clients an advantage by building their people and technology enabling them stand over and above competition.

Our Services

Human Capital Advisory: Training and Development, HR Planning and Management, Human Capital Outsourcing.

Business Advisory: Strategic and Organizational Management, Technology and Innovation Management, Social Policies and Welfare Programmes.

Employee Assistance: Employee Engagement for Productivity and Performance, Psychosocial Risk Management, Employee Wellness and Wellbeing.

Ven. Adelowo Adesina is the Managing Consultant of Sages & Scribes Consultants, and a Priest of the Anglican Communion.