

Example of the grieving process essay

[Religion](#), [God](#)



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Introduction

Grief is defined as a reaction to loss that involves a range of behaviors, thoughts and feelings experienced differently by every individual according to their background, personality, gender and relationship to the loss or deceased. Kubler-Ross developed the five stages of grief in 1969 in her book titled “ On Death and Dying”, and has since been adopted as the general principles of loss and grief that individuals experience when dealing with death. Her book was inspired by her experience of working with terminally ill patients (Kubler-Ross and Kessler, 2005). When in hospital, clinicians are effective in being attentive to a patients need for physical care but ignore their emotional and spiritual needs during the difficult times of learning about a terminal illness or losing a loved one. In a typical hospital setting, health care providers experience grief, but it is often ignored. This discussion offers a review of Job’s story in the bible and how it relates to the five stages of grief as described by Kubler-Ross, explores the Hindu grief process and compares it to the identified stages of grief and finally offers a personal view of grief.

Discussion

The Kubler-Ross's model of the five stages of grief includes denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance all experienced by humans in one way or another regardless of the differences in religion and culture. The stages do not necessarily occur in order but in each stage a common thread of hope emerges. On learning about the loss of a loved one, overwhelming reactions are rationalized as a defense mechanism to buffer the immediate shock and try to shield the reality of the situation. Individuals are said to be in denial and isolation as they try to hide from fact and try to pass through the first wave of pain. As denial wears out, pain and reality re-emerge expressed as anger aimed at the deceased loved one for giving up the fight, medical practitioner for not doing enough or family members for not offering us support (Axelrod, 2006). These reasons may not be true but individuals try to find something to blame. The bargaining step is another form of weaker defense that shields us from the painful reality whereby we seek to regain control by secretly trying to make a deal with the almighty in an attempt to postpone the inevitable. Depression occurs in two types whereby an individual undergoes a restrained and private depression as they prepare to bid farewell to their loved ones while the other type of depression is dominated by sadness and regret following the practical implications (costs and burial) relating to the grief. The final stage of grief is acceptance characterized by withdrawal and calm and is usually a deeply singular and personal experience. Kubler-Ross differentiates acceptance from resignation which is a feeling of bitterness and defeat.

Reviewing the book of job offers the first-hand experience of dealing with

grief and loss and the awareness that they are always a larger plan by God to perform some greater good. In chapter four (Job 4: 1), Eliphaz speaks out on Job's situation revealing the fact that he is hurting. However, he asks whether Job's exemplary life should give him hope in the midst of all his troubles implying that Job denies being in grief. Job's anger about God is seen when he speaks out and complains about bitterness in his soul and anguished spirit. Job is so angry that he prefers to die rather than experience suffering (Garrett, 2008). In chapter nine, Job begins to bargain with God to avail someone to lessen his suffering, intervene between him and God and divert God's wrath so that he could no longer be terrified. In chapter 24, it is evident that Job experiences depression by admitting that in most cases evil seems to prosper over good. It is during this time that he comes close to accepting that God's will is mysterious and loss and grief experience may be a part of God's great plans. Finally, after God confronts him and explains the loss and grief, Job accepts that pain and suffering are instruments used by God to perform some greater good such as teaching lessons to the individual and society at large. The Hindu religion comforts its followers to be prepared for loss since the life they live is short. However, the grieving process should not be extremely sad because in the short life we lead, it should be full of action, growth and achievement to enable yesterday be a dream of happiness and tomorrow a vision of hope.

A personal perception of grief and the stages proposed by Kubler-Ross is that they create an understanding and context of the situation one is in. It also becomes clear that grieving is a personal process with no time limit and no prescribed right way to do it. In most cases, family and friends are usually

around to comfort us but the best strategy to overcome grief is to experience the emotions as they come over since resisting will only prolong the natural process of healing (Tagliaferre & Harbaugh, 2001). During grief, communication is the key so as to reveal the truth about diagnosis in order to allow for hope, joy and happiness during the short period the patient has to live.

Conclusion

Understanding grief is essential for medical practitioners in assisting caregivers who may be unaware they are experiencing grief to recognize and amalgamate these normal responses to loss. Identification and assessment of distinct features exhibited by caregivers in grief is essential in nursing especially when caring for terminally ill patients. Further research studies can be used by nurses in medical institutions to offer regular support and therapeutic contact with caregivers during loss and death.

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