

# Healthy grief

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Running head: Nursing The Grieving Process Essay Outline Even before contemporary scholars began to look at the nature of the grieving process or, basically, 'grief', different religions already illustrated several of the attributes of grief that would be distinguished by modern psychologists. The story of Job in the Holy Bible and the story of Dan in the Torah demonstrate how the grieving process was depicted in the Catholic and Jewish traditions. In numerous literatures on grief it has been believed that a systematic sequence takes place through separate stages which can be characterized by specific attributes (Larson & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1999; Pottinger, 1999). There are several differences in the exact stages, but one of the most commonly used is Kubler-Ross's five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance (Pastan, 1996). This essay uses Kubler-Ross's grieving process theory to analyze the stories of Job and Dan. Job has been blessed by God with a prosperous and contented life. But his faith is tested by God by allowing Satan to take away all the precious things Job has, such as his huge belongings, livelihood, and his beloved family. This massive loss has brought too much grief to Job. However, Job's grieving process does not rigidly follow Kubler-Ross's five-stage model. His first response is 'acceptance', which should be the last phase. He completely accepts that all the things taken away from him belong to God and only God has the power to take them. Eventually, while his sufferings pile up, Job became angry. His anger is rooted in his belief that he has done nothing wrong and thus does not deserve the sufferings he endures. But when God comes up to him, Job bargains by asking for forgiveness. Similarly, Dan, who is facing death, initially accepts the reality of dying by objectively looking at

his situation. He accepts that his time has finally come and that it is time for him to answer for all his sins. Afterward, he becomes angry of himself for trying to kill Joseph and for all the evil deeds he has done throughout his life. The only difference between Job and Dan is the cause of their grief: Job witnesses the death of his beloved family while Dan faces his own death. However, what is fascinating about these stories is that even with the presence of grief joy still blooms in the heart of Job and Dan. Their grief develops from a painful acceptance of what is most important to them; whereas joy relights in them the marvel of God's salvation through acceptance of their tragic experiences. Thus, according to Archer (2001), it is safe to assume that joy only emerges if there is acceptance.

Through this research, I realized that Kubler-Ross's five-stage model of grief is not really a rigid structure of the grieving process. One can skip some of the stages, just like in the cases of Job and Dan, and still finds joy in the end. Kubler-Ross's theory is more like an instrument to help individuals understand their emotions. This five-stage model represents a healthy grieving process (Walter, 1999; Neimeyer, 2001). If I would grieve, I would prefer going through all the stages in order to for me to appreciate more the final phase: acceptance.

#### References

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