

Finding Meaning in Loss

The Sixth Stage of Grief

DAVID KESSLER

Many clients look for “closure” after a loss, but the process of finding meaning and a clear direction out of their pain can transform therapy into a deeper, more hopeful experience. How can therapists help their clients shift from simply exploring pain to experiencing healing and even posttraumatic growth? Learn new ways to help your clients relate to their suffering and move on in a way that honors the loved one they’ve lost. You’ll explore how to:

- Identify strategies to address guilt, shame, and stigma in special circumstances, such as child loss, sibling loss, parental loss, addiction, death by suicide and pandemic losses
- Develop a better understanding of the strength and limitations of the Kubler-Ross’s stage model as well as how a new stage can enhance posttraumatic growth and resiliency
- Explore powerful techniques for using grounded positive psychology to help witness vs. “fixing” grief

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Learning Objectives:

1. Analyze strategies to address guilt, shame, and stigma in special circumstances, such as child loss, sibling loss, parental loss, and death by suicide or addiction.
2. Develop a better understanding of the strength and limitations of the Kubler-Ross's stage model as well as how a new stage can enhance posttraumatic growth and resiliency.
3. Evaluate powerful techniques for using grounded positive psychology to help witness vs. "fixing" grief.

Outline:

1. Identify strategies to address guilt, shame, and stigma in special circumstances, such as child loss, sibling loss, parental loss, and death by suicide or addiction.
 - Understand how shame needs secrecy to survive
 - Identify the relationship between guilt and helplessness
2. Develop a better understanding of the strength and limitations of the Kubler-Ross's stage model as well as how a new stage can enhance posttraumatic growth and resiliency.
 - Be able to explain to clients Kubler Ross's directions for helpful vs non helpful applications for the clients grief experience.
 - Understand myths around acceptance.
3. Explore powerful techniques for using grounded positive psychology to help witness vs. "fixing" grief.
 - Learn how friends and family can interfere with support by pointing out silver linings.
 - Become aware of how the family, friends and even professionals can let their own uncomfortably interfere with a client's grief.

Reference List:

Lichtenthal, Wendy G., et al. "An open trial of meaning-centered grief therapy: Rationale and preliminary evaluation." *Palliative & supportive care* 17.1 (2019): 2.

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Supiano, Katherine P. "The role of theory in understanding grief." *Death studies* 43.2 (2019): 75-78.