

Understanding the Spiral of Grief

Sheila Munafo-Kanoza, Founder and Executive Director

Uniquely made, our minds are accustomed to everything happening in order. When life occurs out of order, it can leave us dazed, confused, and numb. The death of a loved one does just that. It leaves our minds disconnected and scrambling to find a way to reconnect. It is important for us to recognize the impact. In today's society, our lives are fast paced. **We need to allow ourselves to slow down and let God help us to find hope, strength and healing through our grief.**

What is the Spiral of Grief?

I often use a slinky to describe the spiral. There will be many moments in grief where you will find yourself moving forward and backwards, from revisiting your grief to rebuilding your life. Some moments, you might feel as if you are bottoming out, and other moments, you will feel yourself springing back into life. If you're struggling to spring back, it's important to seek out professional help.

The impact of death leaves a deep sadness in your heart. It is a pain which enters your life like no other. It's a pain no one can imagine or describe until one feels it for themselves. With each death, the pain may vary depending on many factors: relationships, family dynamics, friendships and personalities. **No two people grieve the same.**

Characteristics of Grief

Shock/Numbness: Comes as you enter the spiral of grief and can last from hours, to days, to months depending on the type of death.

Protest/Denial: May come as the shock begins to wear off. It is not unusual to think you're having a bad dream, wondering when you're going to wake up. People often say it feels as though they're watching someone else's life. You may even find yourself wishing you were dead. This is a common response, but if you find yourself planning out how you might die, it's important to seek out professional help immediately.

Disorganization: May come as you begin to move through your grief. It's not uncommon at this stage to feel confused. As healing takes place, the reality of what has happened begins to set in. It is important during this time to allow others to help you. I tell people this is the "ADD" time of grief. During this time, you might find the simplest of tasks to be difficult. As you accomplish tasks, pat yourself on the back for the smallest of tasks are HUGE when you're grieving. It's important to get back to your routine as soon as possible as this will help you to create balance.

Reorganization: Comes when you search for new meaning in your life. "Who am I?". You will realize you have a choice: to allow grief to consume you, or to live, laugh, enjoy life, and to remember the love shared for someone who will always be remembered. If struggling to properly fully live, seek professional help.

This spiral of grief doesn't come in any order and is not typically experienced in stages. Feelings can come and go when you least expect them, often bringing on sneak attacks. Self-care is critical when moving through grief.

Remember, grief takes time. No two people grieve the same way.

We're here for you.

8857 Cincinnati-Dayton Road Suite #002, West Chester, OH 45069
(513) 870-9108 | companionsonajourney.org