

## **Grief and the coronavirus/COVID19**

This past week I found a video from Dr. David Kessler speaking on the “Finding Meaning: the 6<sup>th</sup> Stage of Grief”.

Dr. Kubler Ross was a well-known author and researcher on grief and identified “5 stages of grief.” We all grieve when we lose something we treasure. This would include people we love, loss of a job, and loss of health and with the coronavirus/COVID19; we have lost the ability to go about freely with more than 10 people.

The 5 Stages of Grief are:

Denial—“This loss is not happening—too painful to get through my mind. “I don’t want to think about it—it hurts too much!”

Anger—We feel the full force of the loss—crying, distraught, and mad at everything--lashing out at family and strangers.

Bargaining—“Maybe this pandemic isn’t as bad as it seems, maybe we can still plan on giving our Palms on Palm Sunday.” (Which is not going to happen)

Depression—This loss is real and we do become depressed. Many people admitted to me that they are depressed over this pandemic.

Acceptance—“What or who I lost is gone but I will move on and life will be different.”

Identifying the stage of grief that we are in allows us to “name” what is happening to us. This naming assures us that this grieving process is “normal” or “expected” and we can get through it eventually. There is no set timetable for grieving. The stages can skip around, e.g. denial to bargaining back to anger, etc.

Dr. Kessler speaks about finding meaning through a loss. He calls it the “**Finding Meaning: the 6<sup>th</sup> Stage of Grief**”.

He has studied grief for many years and speaks from the experience of the death of his 21-year-old son and his mother. He has worked with Mother Teresa.

His hope when we get through this pandemic that we will have “Post Traumatic Growth” and not “Post Traumatic Stress.”

St. Paul’s Letter to the 1 Thessalonians 4:13 says “We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, that that you **may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope.**” All Christians grieve but we have hope. We have meaning in our grief because of what God has done for us through Jesus.

I invite you to take time to view this link below and discuss or talk with others or me about it. Feel free to contact me if you want to talk about any form or grieving.

Dr. David Kessler has a book called, **Finding Meaning: The 6th stage of Grief** Please check an interview with him. <https://youtu.be/pSOZAnbzFuA>

Finding meaning in a loss Jesus would call “Redemption.” I pray when this pandemic subsides that we will find “meaning” and “redemption” in this experience of loss.

God bless you all!

Fr. Jerry Harris