

Coping With Crisis

Parents of pregnant teens commonly feel a loss of future plans for their child. The sudden and unexpected life-changes for the family will be stressful. Thoughts of becoming a grandparent sooner than anticipated may be unsettling. People experience the following stages of grief whether it is a job loss, loss of a loved one, or an unplanned pregnancy. It is important to remember that our thoughts generate our feelings. Grief is a normal and natural response to coping with crisis.

- Stages do not always occur in this sequence
- A person can experience a stage several times before finally accepting the event
- Each person is different and goes through stages at his or her own pace
- Allow time to experience thoughts and feelings openly to self
- Confide in a trusted individual to express feelings openly
- Crying offers release

STAGE	THOUGHTS	FEELINGS
Denial	"This can't be true." "There must be a mistake".	Shock and numbness
Anger	"This is not fair". "My future plans are ruined".	Striking out, blaming, resentment
Bargaining	"I need more information". "Let's take another test".	Hope – maybe it's not so
Depression	"There is nothing I can do to change things".	Hopelessness, sadness, emptiness, self-pity
Acceptance	"Everything will be okay". "I still love you."	Sense of calm, peacefulness, resolve, Dealing with it

Some important tips to remember:

1. Analyze the situation
 - Use good communication skills
 - Seek professionals who can help
2. Create solutions to the problem
 - Be tolerant
 - Be open and flexible
 - Identify available resources in the community
3. Strengthen the family unit
 - Set aside time for your family to talk.
 - Share thoughts and feelings openly
 - Accept each other's thoughts and feelings
4. Encourage each family member
 - Set goals for the future

- Make plans to reach personal and family goals
- Stay involved with friends and family