

How to deal with loss during job transition - Part 1

This article begins a 4-part series on the stages of loss – denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance - and how they can help you grow both in your personal life and in your career.

While attending a presentation on *The Emotional Impact of Job Loss* sponsored by [Career Assistance Network of Birmingham \(CAN-B\)](#) and presented by [Ashley H. Halsey, MA, LPC who is the Director of Corporate Relations at American Behavioral](#), the topic seemed to expand beyond job loss into the full stages of general loss.

When dealing with grief, you have to understand that you will go through all of the stages. Additionally, sometimes you will experience one stage, move to another then return to the previous stage. This could happen (and is normal) several times until you reach the final stage of acceptance. According to Ms. Halsey, “grief is a normal response to an abnormal situation” and she adds that while moving through these stages, you must determine if you are “resistant or resilient” to the changes involved in this process.

Some physical responses to grief can involve: too much or too little sleep, the desire to make irrational decisions, fear, anxiety, panic, and mood swings such as elation followed by depression.

Ms. Halsey’s presentation ended with some ideas on how to overcome the extreme feelings of loss during job transition. She contended that this is a time for personal growth and that you should take a quiet moment each day to reflect on your situation and yourself. She added that during this time it would be [good to volunteer](#) and that serving others will help you grow as well. These two experiences – quiet reflection and serving others – would allow you to “seek opportunities for greatness” and take your life from “good to great.”

After the reflecting on your life and situation, Ms. Halsey added that you should write a mission statement and start with questions like:

- What is my identity?
- What is my personal mission?
- What has been my biggest challenge during this difficult time?
- What have I learned?
- What will I try as a healthy coping skill?
- Will I chose to be resistant or resilient?

With your mission statement written and the basic tools of coping in place, this will put you on your way to working through the stages of grief and on to healing.

Refer to the [American Behavioral website](#) for additional information or [email](#) for specific questions.