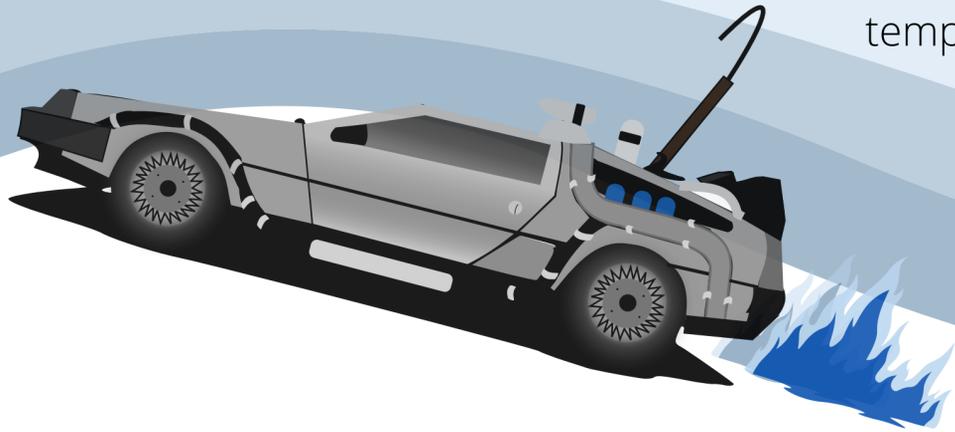


Back to A Future

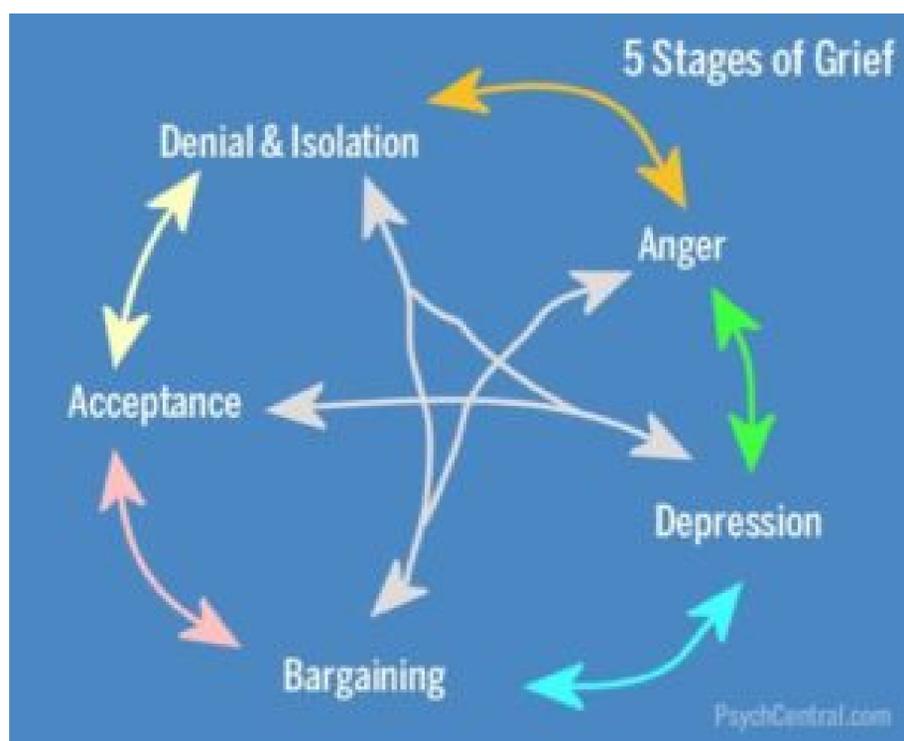
In the classic movie Back to the Future, Marty McFly bungles his way into the past to meddle with a future that turns out just right. This series of monographs is designed to help you reflect back upon elements that forge a future of blessings, blessings which Henri Nouwen defines as "Glimpses of the face of God": Welcome to Back to **A** Future, a weekly template for open and expressive conversations for getting life just right.



Last time Back to A Future introduced the draw of a circle ([link here](#)) to share about challenges and difficulties, and moving forward in this monograph, expressly to address:

Loss and its Fallout-Grief

Since March 2022, not one person has been unaffected, not left unscathed by the coronavirus. Bottom line: we all lost something over these past trying months, adding new dimensions of collective grief (what we lost in common) and anticipatory grief (worry and fear over what's to come next) to the 5 (+2) unorderly manifestations and interplay of grief on our psyche. Grief accompanies any experience of loss.



Circle Prompts

1. Use the visuals of the tied ribbons or talking stick to process'
 - **What have you lost recently?**
 - **When you think of the pandemic, what is lost?**
 - **Which of these 5+2 stages of grief did you or do you now experience?**
 - **What imprint has this had on you?**

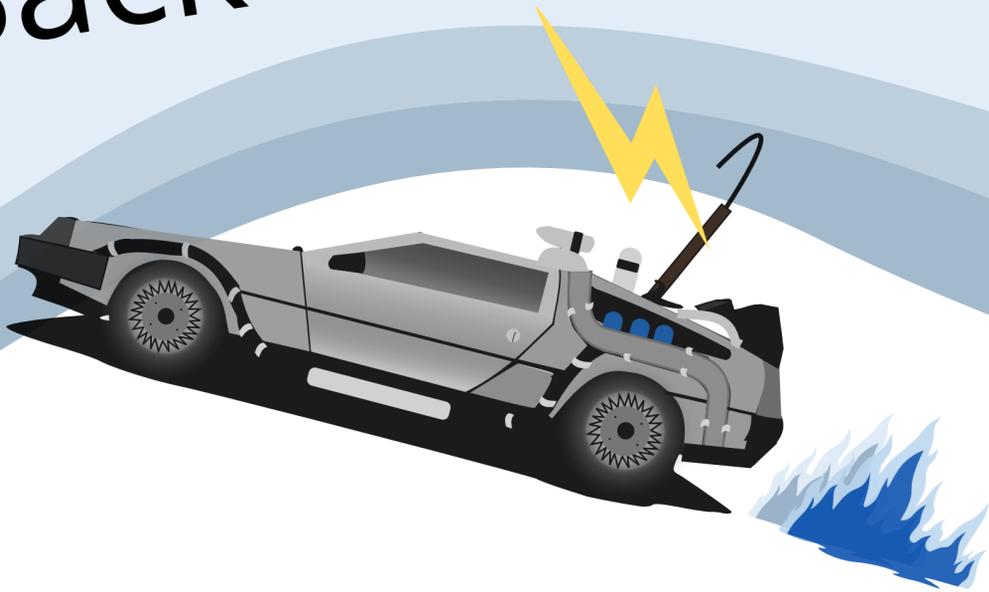
2. [Check out the interview with Mark Kessler](#), the inspiration behind this monograph.



Read more about Grief stages on next page



Back to A Future



Grief stages

[from HBR interview with Kessler](#)



- There's denial, which we say a lot of early on: *This virus won't affect us.*
- There's anger: *You're marking me stay home and taking away my activities?*

Somewhere in this mix, the five don't happen sequentially, there's anticipatory grief: *I wonder what the future holds, everything is so uncertain.* In the discomfort, people begin to project in the moments of anxiousness, to imagine the worst, to question in the face of the unknown.

- There's also bargaining; *Okay, if I social distance for two weeks everything will be better, right?*
- There's sadness: *I don't know where this will end.*
- And finally, after tumbling through this mix there's finally acceptance. *This is happening; I have to figure out how to proceed.*

Acceptance, as you might imagine, is where the power lies. We find control in acceptance. *I can wash my hands. I can keep a safe distance. I can learn how to work virtually.*

In acceptance, I come back into the present, and spiritually into the presence of the steadfast God.

In the interview, Kessler advances a sixth concluding stage, that of meaning. I trust you find that meaning from the familiar victory hymn, In your Redeemer who lives...

*To silence all my fears
He lives to wipe away my tears
He lives to calm my troubled heart
He live all blessings to impart*