

**North Shore Hebrew Academy**  
**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Assignment**



Dear Students and Parents,

Over the summer, all students entering seventh grade will be reading the novel Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie by Jordan Sonnenblik. The book will be available for purchase at Barnes & Noble on Northern Boulevard in Manhasset. It can also be found online.

Before, during and after reading, you should use the attached information to guide your reading and better help you understand the novel. Be prepared to hand in your assignments and annotated books on the first day of school.

In addition to the novel, students will be responsible for a list of vocabulary words. These words are linked here: <https://quizlet.com/44463199/7th-grade-summer-vocab-flash-cards/> or can be accessed by logging on to quizlet.com and then searching nshamiddleschool. This will bring you to the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Vocabulary link.

Students will have an assessment on both items upon entering school in September.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may email me at [lguggenheimer@nsha.org](mailto:lguggenheimer@nsha.org)

I look forward to a wonderful and productive year together!

**Before Reading the Novel:**

**Read the articles:**

**Leukemia**

**<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/cancer.html>**

**Five Stages of Grief**

**Watch the video:**

**The OC – Summer’s Grief**

**(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilfg2wXv6vk>)**

**While You Read the Novel:**

- Be sure to highlight and annotate sections of the novel that connect to the articles you have read as well as sections of the novel that provide you with information about setting (time, place or mood), character development (descriptions of physical or emotional aspects of a character), plot elements (how the story develops over the course of the novel) and themes (messages the author is teaching).
- Complete the following questions.

**Directions for completing the questions:**

All answers must be written in COMPLETE sentences. EACH sentence must contain a minimum of 7-11 words. Each group of questions must be 8 sentences AND include at least 2 specific supporting details from the novel with page numbers.

Be sure to check all work for correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.

- 1) **After pages 1-36:** What kind of person is Steven? List several aspects of Steven’s personality so far and give supporting text examples with page numbers. Predict how you think he will respond to his brother’s illness in the upcoming chapters.

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- 2) **After pages 37-79:** How is Steven handling Jeffrey’s illness so far? How is Jeffrey handling this disease? How is Jeffrey’s leukemia affecting each of the parents? What is Steven’s attitude toward his mom and dad?

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**3) After pages 80-130:** In what ways does Steven’s concern for Jeffrey show in his thoughts and actions? What one escape does he have from his problems? How does Steven attempt to entertain and comfort Jeffrey?

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**4) After pages 131-175:** Describe a few of the causes of Steven’s anger in this section of the book. If you were Steven, do you think you would react the same way? Why or why not? Although he feels lonely and neglected, what signs are there that others really do care about him?

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**5) After pages 176-205:** What causes Steven to seek his counselor’s advice? What does she tell him to do? Do you think this is good advice for him? Why or why not? In what specific ways does he follow her advice and what is the outcome?

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6) **After pages 206-242:** How does Steven’s visit to the hospital in Philadelphia change him and also make him more of a “man”? What does he see and whom does he meet at the hospital?

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7) **After pages 243-273:** What factors cause Steven to leave the concert right before his big drum solo? Do you think it was the right decision? Why or why not? What would you have done in this situation?

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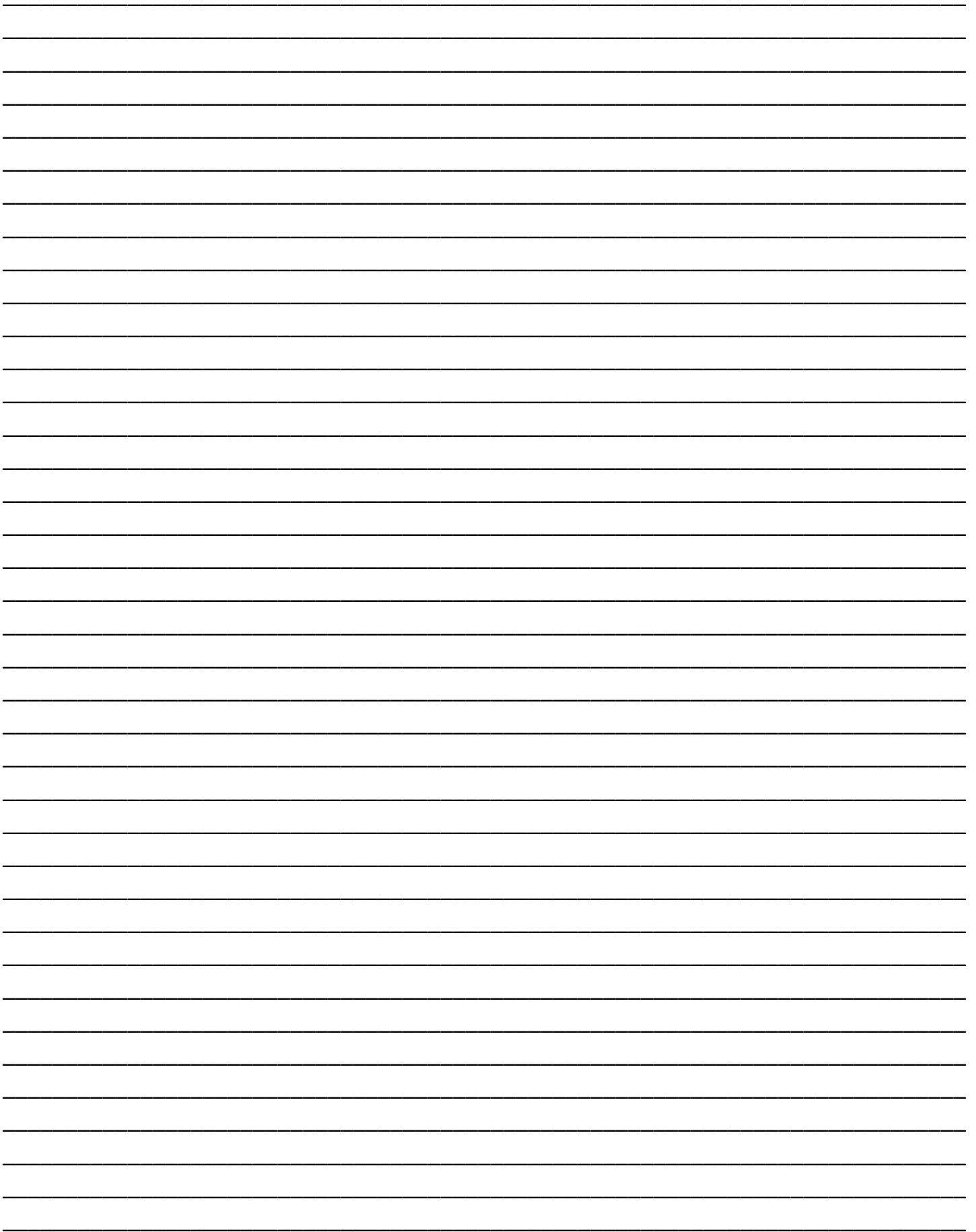
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# What Is Cancer?

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Reviewed by: [Dorothea N. Douglas, MD](#)

Cancer is a scary word. Almost everyone knows someone who got very sick or died from cancer. Most of the time, cancer affects older people. Not many kids get cancer, but when they do, very often it can be treated and cured.

## What Is Cancer?

Cancer is actually a group of many related diseases that all have to do with cells. Cells are the very small units that make up all living things, including the human body. There are billions of cells in each person's body.

Cancer happens when cells that are not normal grow and spread very fast. Normal body cells grow and divide and know to stop growing. Over time, they also die. Unlike these normal cells, cancer cells just continue to grow and divide out of control and don't die when they're supposed to.

Cancer cells usually group or clump together to form tumors (say: TOO-mers). A growing tumor becomes a lump of cancer cells that can destroy the normal cells around the tumor and damage the body's healthy tissues. This can make someone very sick.

Sometimes cancer cells break away from the original tumor and travel to other areas of the body, where they keep growing and can go on to form new tumors. This is how cancer spreads. The spread of a tumor to a new place in the body is called metastasis (say: meh-TASS-tuh-sis).

## Causes of Cancer

You probably know a kid who had chickenpox — maybe even you. But you probably don't know any kids who've had cancer. If you packed a large football stadium with kids, probably only one child in that stadium would have cancer.

Doctors aren't sure why some people get cancer and others don't. They do know that cancer is not contagious. You can't catch it from someone else who has it — cancer isn't caused by germs, like colds or the flu are. So don't be afraid of other kids — or anyone else — with cancer. You can talk to, play with, and hug someone with cancer.

Kids can't get cancer from anything they do either. Some kids think that a bump on the head causes brain cancer or that bad people get cancer. This isn't true! Kids don't do anything wrong to get cancer. But some unhealthy habits, especially cigarette smoking or drinking too much alcohol every day, can make you a lot more likely to get cancer when you become an adult.



## Finding Out About Cancer

It can take a while for a doctor to figure out a kid has cancer. That's because the symptoms cancer can cause — weight loss, fevers, swollen glands, or feeling overly tired or sick for a while — usually are not caused by cancer. When a kid has these problems, it's often caused by something less serious, like an infection. With medical testing, the doctor can figure out what's causing the trouble.

If the doctor suspects cancer, he or she can do tests to figure out if that's the problem. A doctor might order X-rays and blood tests and recommend the person go to see an oncologist (say: on-KAH-luh-jist). An oncologist is a doctor who takes care of and treats cancer patients. The oncologist will likely run other tests to find out if someone really has cancer. If so, tests can determine what kind of cancer it is and if it has spread to other parts of the body. Based on the results, the doctor will decide the best way to treat it.

One test that an oncologist (or a surgeon) may perform is a biopsy (say: BY-op-see). During a biopsy, a piece of tissue is removed from a tumor or a place in the body where cancer is suspected, like the bone marrow. Don't worry — someone getting this test will get special medicine to keep him or her comfortable during the biopsy. The sample that's collected will be examined under a microscope for cancer cells.

The sooner cancer is found and treatment begins, the better someone's chances are for a full recovery and cure.

## Treating Cancer Carefully

Cancer is treated with surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation — or sometimes a combination of these treatments. The choice of treatment depends on:

- the type of cancer someone has (the kind of abnormal cells causing the cancer)
- the stage of the tumor (meaning how much the cancer has spread within the body, if at all)

Surgery is the oldest form of treatment for cancer — 3 out of every 5 people with cancer will have an operation to remove it. During surgery, the doctor tries to take out as many cancer cells as possible. Some healthy cells or tissue may also be removed to make sure that all the cancer is gone.

Chemotherapy (say: kee-mo-THER-uh-pee) is the use of anti-cancer medicines (drugs) to treat cancer. These medicines are sometimes taken as a pill but usually are given through a special intravenous (say: in-truh-VEE-nus) line, also called an IV. An IV is a tiny plastic catheter (straw-like tube) that is put into a vein through someone's skin, usually on the arm. The catheter is attached to

a bag that holds the medicine. The medicine flows from the bag into a vein, which puts the medicine into the blood, where it can travel throughout the body and attack cancer cells.

Chemotherapy is usually given over a number of weeks to months. Often, a permanent catheter is placed under the skin into a larger blood vessel of the upper chest. This way, a person can easily get several courses of chemotherapy and other medicines through this catheter without having a new IV needle put in. The catheter remains under the skin until all the cancer treatment is completed.

Radiation (say: ray-dee-AY-shun) therapy uses high-energy waves, such as X-rays (invisible waves that can pass through most parts of the body), to damage and destroy cancer cells. It can cause tumors to shrink and even go away completely. Radiation therapy is one of the most common treatments for cancer. Many people with cancer find it goes away after receiving radiation treatments.

With both chemotherapy and radiation, kids may experience side effects. A side effect is an extra problem that's caused by the treatment. Radiation and anti-cancer drugs are very good at destroying cancer cells but, unfortunately, they also destroy healthy cells. This can cause problems such as loss of appetite, tiredness, vomiting, or hair loss. With radiation, a person might have red or irritated skin in the area that's being treated. But all these problems go away and hair grows back after the treatment is over. During the treatment, certain medicines can help a kid feel better.

While treatment is still going on, a kid might not be able to attend school or be around crowds of people — the kid needs to rest and avoid getting infections, such as the flu, when he or she already isn't feeling well. The body may have more trouble fighting off infections because of the cancer or side effects of the treatment.

## **Getting Better**

Remission (say: ree-MIH-shun) is a great word for anyone who has cancer. It means all signs of cancer are gone from the body. After surgery or treatment with radiation or chemotherapy, a doctor will then do tests to see if the cancer is still there. If there are no signs of cancer, then the kid is in remission.

Remission is the goal when any kid with cancer goes to the hospital for treatment. Sometimes, this means additional chemotherapy or radiation might be needed for a while to keep cancer cells from coming back.

**Reviewed by:** [Dorothea N. Douglas, MD](#)

Date reviewed: October 2016

## **Leukemia**

Teens generally get one of two types of leukemia:

- **ALL** – Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia
- **AML** – Acute Myeloid or Myelogenous Leukemia

### OK, so what is leukemia?

Leukemia is a form of **cancer** that starts in the **bone marrow** where all your **blood** is made. The bone marrow is a spongy material inside your bones where blood cells are produced and mature.

Different types of blood cells are made in healthy bone marrow:

**Red blood cells** carry oxygen and nutrients to all cells in your body.

**Platelets** are cells that help your blood to clot and stop bleeding.

**White cells** help fight infection. The white cells are responsible for recognizing foreign substances like **bacteria** and viruses. White blood cells can communicate with each other to help fight infection.

Some types of white blood cells make antibodies to destroy these foreign substances, and other white cells ingest the foreign substance.

**(A little like Pac-Man!)**

You have different types of white blood cells: lymphoid and myeloid.

The type of white blood **cell** that goes crazy determines the type of leukemia you have.

### Those Darn **Blast Cells**...



Although the exact cause is unknown, something happens that makes very young cells multiply but never grow or mature to become useful or functional. These abnormal cells are called leukemia blasts or just blasts and are one indicator of leukemia.

What's so bad about blasts in your bone marrow and blood? These abnormal cells are taking up space and pushing out the normal, healthy cells in your bone marrow. The blasts take up all the room in your bone marrow and you cannot make normal healthy blood cells. This puts you at risk for infections (low white blood), **anemia** (low red blood count) and bleeding (low platelet count).

### Not Another Bone Marrow **Biopsy**...

A **bone marrow sample** is essential for an accurate diagnosis. The biggest sources of bone marrow in your body are your hips, the long bones of your legs, your breastbone, and all the vertebrae of your spine. This explains why your bone marrow test may have been done on your hipbone. This is a big bone that contains lots of bone marrow and is a relatively safe place to do the test.

It will be extremely important to keep checking your bone marrow after your treatment is underway. You need to be sure that your treatment is clearing the leukemia cells from your bone marrow.

### Speaking of Treatment...

The primary treatment for leukemia includes **chemotherapy** and maybe **radiation**, in some cases. **Bone marrow transplantation** is also sometimes used. Your specific diagnosis will determine what happens next. Your treatment will be planned by a team of cancer specialists with experience and expertise in treating leukemia. Working together with you and your parents, they will recommend the best plan of action.

### Checking Counts...

Most of the time your blood counts will be checked to determine the status of your bone marrow. This will help your medical team know how your chemotherapy is working. Your counts will also give clues about what you might need to supplement your own body's supply of blood.

For example, if you are having headaches or feeling dizzy because your bone marrow can't make enough red blood cells, you will probably need a transfusion to help decrease your anemia.

Transfusions of platelets can also be done if you are having problems with bleeding.

### "But It's Only a Little Fever"...

You may have been warned about high fevers.

### Why are fevers such a big deal?

Good question. Fevers are one sign of infection. If you have good counts and plenty of healthy white blood cells to fight infections, then fever is not a huge problem. But if your white blood count is low, this is a big deal.

Serious infections can settle in your bloodstream or other parts of your body (sepsis). If you don't have a good supply of white blood cells and you have a fever over 38 C or 100.5 F, you will automatically be treated with antibiotics to help you fight off bacteria that can cause very serious, potentially life-threatening infections.

### I'm In Remission – Why More Chemo?...

Many kids want to know why they have to keep getting chemotherapy even though they are in remission. This is another good question.

Remission is very important to achieve. It means that when the bone marrow is evaluated under the microscope, 95% of all the cells must be normal and there must be a good mixture of white blood cells, red cells, and platelets. **No blasts allowed!** Your treatment will continue even though you are in remission to make sure that every last blast is destroyed by the chemotherapy.

### Hang In There...



Getting rid of leukemia is demanding and difficult work, filled with some difficult turns. You need to be just as tough and determined to keep the leukemia out of your bone marrow as those blasts are determined to stay in your body. Get help from your doctors and nurses so they can answer your questions and help you adapt to life with this disease. Count on your parents, family, and friends for support.

Try to meet other kids who are having treatment or who have already been through chemo. They can give you advice and encouragement.

# Five Stages of Grief for Steven Alper

*Find specific examples from the novel that show Steven experiencing each stage of grief. Your example may be a direct quote of something he says or an explanation of something he does. A page number is provided for one of the 2 required examples.*

## Stage one \_\_\_\_\_ (page 64)

Example #1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Example #2 \_\_\_\_\_

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## Stage two \_\_\_\_\_ (page 132)

Example #1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Example #2 \_\_\_\_\_

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**Stage three** \_\_\_\_\_ (page 79)

Example #1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Example #2 \_\_\_\_\_

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**Stage four** \_\_\_\_\_ (page 150)

Example #1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Example #2 \_\_\_\_\_

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**Stage five** \_\_\_\_\_ (page 161)

Example #1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Example #2 \_\_\_\_\_

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## **FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF**

When going through a traumatic event (i.e. death of a loved one, terminal illness, traumatic injury, *etc.*), people tend to react in the same way. There are 5 stages most of us go through. Some people may skip a step altogether. The length of time in each step varies.

### **Stage One DENIAL**

At first, people may deny the event is happening. People may also SECLUDE from (or draw away from) their usual contacts (friends/family/*etc.*)

### **Stage Two ANGER**

In this stage, the person is angry at different people. Angry at the cause (including the dead person). Angry at themselves. Angry at the world or society. The anger occurs, even if the incident was unavoidable.

### **Stage three BARGAINING**

In this stage, the person gets in touch with God. Example: "If you take this away, I'll be nicer to everyone and give back to charity..."

### **Stage four DEPRESSION**

At this point, the person is depressed. Depression takes many forms (not just sadness). He/she may be sad. There may be undertones of anger. Mostly, the person feels numb. They no longer care about hobbies, interests, work, or their happiness; he/she may sleep more and be more withdrawn than usual.

### **Stage five ACCEPTANCE**

The anger, sadness, and numbness wear off. The person begins to accept the loss. This is not happiness or satisfaction with the result. The person begins to move on- he/she accepts the situation and starts to adjust. He/she moves on as a person and attempts personal growth.