

Identity Theft: Rediscovering Ourselves After Stroke

By Debra E. Meyerson, PhD with Danny Zuckerman

Chapter 7: Grief

1. Many counselors and therapists “compare the experience of stroke to bereavement” (p. 80) and the Kübler-Ross grief model can be used as a resource and framework to help stroke survivors through the grieving process.
 - a. How is the process of recovering from a stroke similar to the grieving process?
 - b. What stages of the emotional grief model do you feel you and your survivor have gone through since experiencing a stroke?
 - c. Where do you feel you are now in the process?
 - d. How did you, as the carepartner, feel watching your survivor experience various stages of grief?
 - e. Did you find any stages to be harder, or last longer, than others?
 - f. Have you experienced certain stages more than once?
 - i. If so, what do you think has contributed to these cycles?
 - g. Is your survivor now in the same place as you?
 - i. If not, how does this affect your relationship and communication?
 - h. Were any tools shared in *Identity Theft* particularly helpful in accepting the emotional impact of your survivor’s stroke?
 - i. Have you found other tools or techniques helpful that weren’t discussed in the book?

2. Debra shares that, “clinical depression affects one out of three stroke survivors and it often goes undiagnosed” (p. 80)
 - a. What are the signs of clinical depression?
 - b. Are you familiar with symptoms of anxiety, post-traumatic stress or other potential mental health issues following stroke?
 - c. Have you seen signs of depression in yourself or your survivor since your survivor’s stroke?
 - d. Debra notes that “many doctors as well as family members tend to

explain away depression as an understandable response.” (p. 85)

What’s the effect of explaining away depression?

- e. Have your survivor’s emotional needs been properly met by the professionals with whom you have worked during their post-stroke care experience?
 - i. How has this affected you?
 - f. Have your own emotional needs been properly met by the professionals with whom you have worked during your post-stroke care experience?
 - g. What resources have you used for support along the emotional journey?
 - h. Have you found it challenging to find appropriate emotional support for your survivor or yourself?
- 3.** In addition to some of the other coping strategies that Debra shares, she writes that she’s “picked up meditation, which has helped me keep calm and reset my frame of mind when needed.” (p. 86)
- a. Have you or your survivor tried meditation?
 - i. If not, how might the practice impact your and your survivor’s recovery?
 - b. Are there any other types of practices, like yoga or music, or apps that you find particularly helpful?