

Life After Layoff

Yes, there is life after a layoff. After seven years of working for a non-profit organization, in August of 2006, I experienced being laid-off without notice and without a severance package. The layoff came on the heels of a few mountain top experiences that left me basking in an euphoric high that initially minimized the overall affect of being unemployed. The unemployment thrust me into a full-time business owner. The thoughts of what am I going to do now wasn't my biggest challenge.

For some; layoffs, down-sizing, and organization restructuring is awful news, therefore, you have to be able to quickly land on your feet and bounce back after a set-back; sometimes what appears to be a set-back is really a set-up to move you forward. First things first, take the appropriate time to grieve your lost, just don't get stuck because you will not be able to grow or move forward looking backward and dwelling on the past.

The most painful part of life is loss. The closer one is to the relationship the deeper the lost. The loss of anything that matters will trigger the grieving process. This process can take a few days to a few years, depending on the depth of our attachment. So understand the process that you are going through. To become an over-comer you must effectively navigate through the five stages of grieving and loss.

Denial is usually the first emotion or reaction to the loss of an attachment. What we all need to know is denial is normal. An individual is not unbalanced because they are trying to wrap their mind and thoughts around losing something or someone. How to overcome denial is to tell yourself, "Yes this did happen to me".

Anger is the result of the pain experienced from grief. Anger causes deep hurt that is unhealthy and unnecessary. Anger must be dealt with immediately. Prolonged anger causes you to lose the years you allowed the anger to consume you. Let it go. Forgive them and release yourself. Forgiveness is not for the other person it's for you. Forgiveness gives you the ability to heal yourself from your loss.

Bargaining is the process of making an attempt to gain back what was lost. Another perspective is not viewing the attachment or position as a lost but you've outgrown it. For example, you have a plant in a small planter once the plant reaches its capacity of the small planter you re-pot the plant into a larger planter so the plant can grow. You

would never consider taking the plant and putting it back into the smaller planter because it has moved into areas of greater opportunity.

Depression is normal and it is the most dangerous stage of grief. Depression is different from normal sadness in that it engulfs your day-to-day life, interfering with your ability to work, study, eat, sleep, and have fun. The feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and worthlessness are intense and unrelenting, with little, if any, relief. It may last longer in some people than in others. Emotionally healthy people work through their depression a lot quicker than those that are emotionally unhealthy. Transition from depression is what brings a person to the final stage. There is always a light at the end of the tunnel, for those suffering from depression the tunnel appears to be longer and darker than for most.

Acceptance is the decision to be at peace with the choice or results, knowing that no amount of denial, bargaining, anger or depression is going to recover the loss. Accepting loss is part of life and moving forward is removing the emptiness that exists within. Acceptance is picking up the pieces and move on with your life but putting together a game plan to assist you with moving forward.

As we transition through life there are times, reasons, and seasons and knowing the purpose that you exist will help with in transitioning through the stages of grief and loss. Three years later, after my layoff I'm a better person; despite the recession, set-backs and hard-times I'm still in business. I realize that sometimes we can stay too long in a place and its God allowing events and circumstances to move us where He wants us to be, because when we stay in a place longer than we should we stunt our own growth. I work long hours (twice the amount I did for my previous employer) and my work ethics has intensified. One of the greatest things is that every day when I unlock the door to my office I remember God's promise to me and me thank God for His Grace and His keeping power.