



# A Roadmap for the Newly Diagnosed

## *The Road to Acceptance*

When you are newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) you may experience a wide range of emotions.<sup>1</sup>

Grief is a common emotion. In fact, grief itself is a journey – there are “stages” of grief that are common following a new diagnosis.

Do any of these feelings resonate with you? These are all components of the stages of grief.

### **Stages of Grief**

**Denial:** It is a way for your body to defend yourself, so you don't become completely overwhelmed with grief. It is your body's way of saying, “Hey, there's only so much I can handle at once.” You may find yourself saying things like “Not me, it can't be true.”

**Anger:** Feeling frustrated or angry is a common reaction to a new diagnosis. It is a natural response to think, “Why me?” and “Life is not fair!”

**Bargaining:** Have you ever thought to yourself, “What if the doctor is wrong?” or “What if I found out about my MS sooner?” You might falsely make yourself believe that you can avoid the grief through a type of negotiation.

**Depression:** You may feel overwhelmed, withdraw from life, or feel numb. It is important to talk to your doctor and ask for support and resources to help you.

**Acceptance:** This stage is the turning point. Through acceptance, you may find control. It may also be a time of adjustment and readjustment.

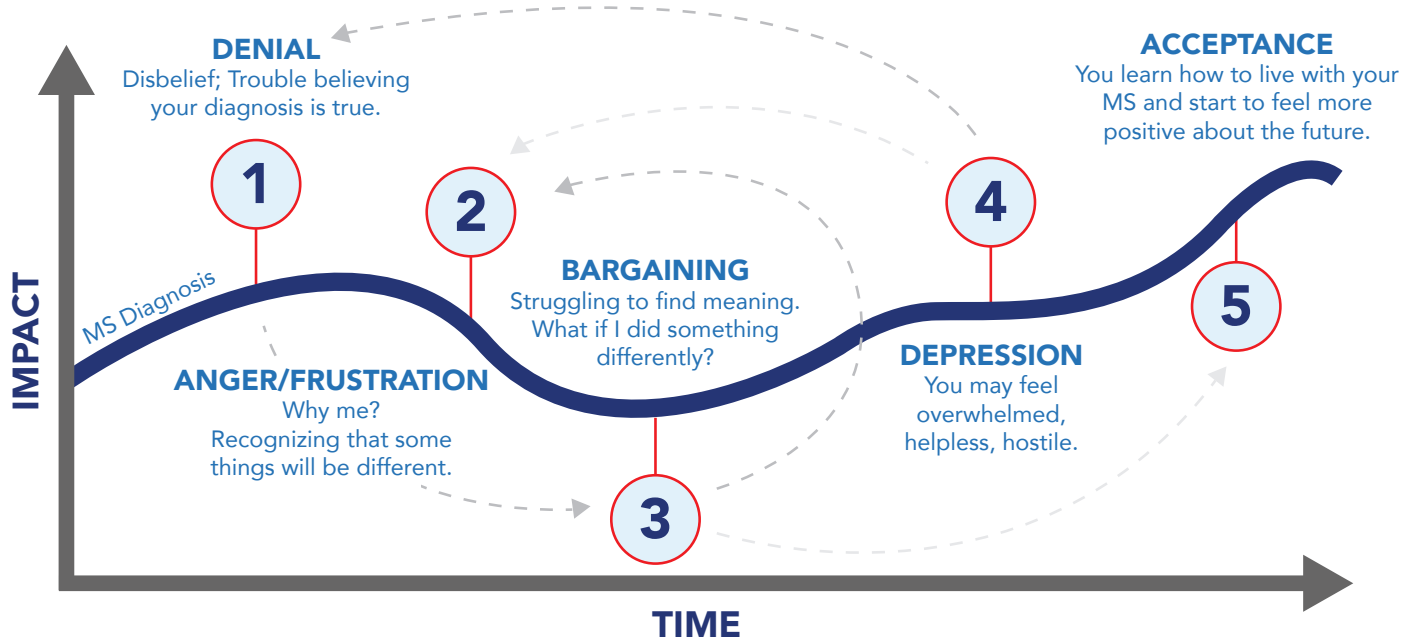
**These are all “stages” of grief, but there is no one place to begin and people do not necessarily go through the stages in order. Everyone's journey is different.**



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The stages of grief do not follow an order – you can go through each stage several times.<sup>2</sup>



As you embark on your journey with MS, it's important to reflect on what emotions you're feeling. Whether you think you're experiencing grief or something else, being in tune with your feelings is important.

Use the space below to jot down how you're feeling in this moment.

### References

1. Denk A. The 5 Stages of Grief that Come with a New Medical Diagnosis. Healthline. August 28, 2020. Accessed August 2021. <https://www.healthline.com/health/chronic-illness/stages-of-grief-new-medical-diagnosis>
2. Gregory C. The Five Stages of Grief: An Examination of the Kubler-Ross Model. Updated May 4, 2021. Accessed August 2021. <https://www.psychom.net/depression.central.grief.html>