

How Can I Support Someone in Grief?

***“A joy shared is doubled;
A grief shared is halved.”***

- **Don't try to take away the pain. It is not possible. Perhaps your greatest gift is to be with someone in pain without trying to “fix” it. Offer a nonanxious and nonjudgmental presence.**
 - **Don't expect the bereaved person to be same person as before. Part of the struggle of grief is to define a “new self.”**
 - **Avoid making assumptions about what the grieving person needs. Ask instead of tell. Avoid using cliches.**
 - **Listen. Listen. And listen again. Repetition is natural for persons in grief. Learn to be comfortable with all emotions.**
 - **Offer specific assistance - grocery shopping, childcare, errands.**
 - **Encourage and recall memories. Death ends a life, not a relationship. Don't avoid speaking about the deceased.**
 - **Be patient. Recognize that grief involves physical, behavioral, and cognitive responses as well as emotional. A grieving person is more susceptible to illness during grief. Low energy, poor concentration, irritability, and disorganization are normal.**
 - **Personal faith is frequently a major source of comfort during grief. An equally natural response is to question one's cherished beliefs or philosophy of life. Affirm both responses as healthy.**
 - **Grief has no timetable. Be there! Not just today, but tomorrow, next month, a year from today, and special days.**
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***Condolence is the art of giving courage
-Monica Lehner-Kahn***