

Some keys to help a bereaved

DON'T LET THE FEAR OF SAYING OR DOING THE WRONG THING STOP YOU FROM COMMUNICATING



PAIN IS NOT SOMETHING YOU CAN "FIX"

But there are things you can do to offer them comfort and support during this difficult time:

LISTEN WITH COMPASSION

Make your presence "felt"

Allow the bereaved to speak up and express their grief in the way they need to.

- Build an adequate listening space
- Ask the person how they feel... It's not to be taken for granted... Pain emotions can change quickly
- You can also be comforting by simply remaining silent next to the bereaved

Validates feelings and the right to grieve

- Recognize the difficulty of the moment
- Allow the bereaved to feel and express the full range of difficult emotions (sadness, anger, fear, despair, guilt, relief...).
- Reassure them that grieving is a natural and healthy reaction and is not something to be ashamed of.

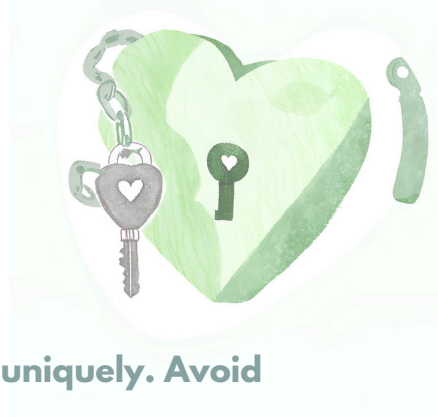
Don't deny what happened: Express your grief over the loss

- At times, we hesitate to address it due to the fear of stirring up existing pain, even though it lingers. Uncertainty about the right words or actions may hold us back, but showing support and empathy is always a positive gesture.



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LISTEN WITH COMPASSION (cont.)



Suspend judgment

- Suspending judgment involves respecting others' unique ways of expressing pain, even if different from our own.

Everyone's experience of pain is **UNIQUE**

- It's important to acknowledge that everyone experiences pain uniquely. Avoid assuming or comparing your pain to others.

Demonstrate your genuine interest

- Let the person know you are interested in them and available for them to confide in you.

Acknowledge the life story of the deceased and respect the relationship

- Some people talk about the event immediately, even multiple times
- Others will probably need more time and just require your presence.

Avoid "clichés"...

- Don't try to minimize losses, provide simplistic solutions, or offer unsolicited advice



Express gestures of closeness



- If you find it difficult to express yourself verbally, gestures like holding hands or offering a hug can convey support and companionship effectively.

Offer hands-on support

- It can be hard for bereaved to seek help due to feeling like a burden or lack of energy. Instead of vague offers, provide specific suggestions to make it easier for them to accept support.

Help the bereaved by assisting in organizing a memorial gathering or a special farewell to honor the deceased

- Suggesting a joint visit to the cemetery or arranging a commemorative gathering can provide a meaningful farewell, offering support to the bereaved friend or family member.

Offer ongoing support

- Provide additional support on significant days as grief may resurface during holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries. Offer sensitivity and assurance of your presence for any needed support.



**Grief support
is a
responsibility
of all.**

**For more
information on
grief support,
please visit our
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