

How to Help Those Who Are Grieving

Grief has no clear beginning or end. It is a journey that will ebb and flow for the rest of our lives. We never get over the death of someone we love. We somehow find a way to live with it. It is important to let the bereaved know that they are allowed to grieve for as long as needed. Till that time comes. Where they are able to remember the one that has died, without feeling pain.

“Sympathy is two hearts tugging at one load”

TRY NOT TO...

Just as there is no right or wrong way to grieve there is no right or wrong way to support. There are however some things which should be avoided in saying, as these can be hurtful and minimize their loss.

Try not to say you know how they feel. No two grieves will be the same and each grief is as unique as the relationship they shared with the person they have lost.

Don't tell them they have to be strong. It is in the depths of grief that we are at our most vulnerable.

Don't tell them they need to get on with life. Life as they knew it is not the same and they will need to learn how to live their life without the person who has died. This takes time.

Don't say they had a good life, they are at peace now or you are lucky to have had them for so long. No one feels lucky to lose someone they love.

Don't say it is Gods way, the natural order of things or nature's way. Logical explanations are cold comfort when you are grieving.

It is not comforting to remind the bereaved that at least they had a chance to say goodbye to the deceased. We never want to say goodbye to those we love.

Be mindful when telling the bereaved they are coping well. They may appear to be coping but it does not mean they have stopped hurting and are done grieving.

Do not compare their grief to others or make suggestions that someone else's loss was greater. This will only make the bereaved feel their loss is not a significant one and that they do not have the right to grieve.

Don't tell them they are grieving the wrong way or make suggestions about how they should be dealing with their grief.

Just be there, with a hug, a comforting hand or an open ear. Invite them over often even if they say no. Invite them on special occasions where their loss is so completely overwhelming. Birthdays, Anniversaries, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas etc.

“Sometimes there are no perfect words. Only thoughtful silences that whisper softly of caring”

Pass this along to someone who is grieving, or to guide someone who's friend/family member is grieving. Remember the stronger the relationship, the harder the grief is. If there are multiple losses in a short period of time, the more painful the grief. Most importantly don't expect them to “be the same” as they were before the loss, they will never be the same. ~ Donna Weber