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Ways To Help a Grieving Friend

1. HOWEVER THEY ARE BEHAVING IS NORMAL

Everyone experiences grief differently. There is no formula or right way to do this. So don't judge, analyze or criticize. Family members who have experienced the same loss may all behave differently and they are all normal.

2. GET COMFORTABLE BEING UNCOMFORTABLE

Grief makes most of us very uncomfortable. Why? Because someone we care about is in deep pain and we want to fix it but we can't. It is a feeling of helplessness, so we often avoid having to deal with them at all. Once you realize there is absolutely nothing you can do to fix this and you aren't supposed to try, it can relieve some of the pressure you may feel. If you aren't sure what to say, tell them that. "I have no idea what to say to you. This is just awful and I feel so bad for you." "I know there is nothing I can say to fix this but I want you to know how much I care and my heart hurts for your pain." "I don't know what to say. I am so very sorry." That's it! You don't have to say anything else.

3. SAY LESS AND DO MORE

Grievers need to be listened to with respect and not talked at. One of the greatest gifts you can give them is to just be there and listen. Let them talk. Many of them love to talk about their loved one and they are just waiting for a chance. Others may not want to talk. Just ask them. Please don't tell them they need to get help or what they need to be doing. They don't want to be analyzed. The gift of your presence is the best gift you can give them. Simply be there. You don't have to say much at all.

4. MEET A PRACTICAL NEED

It's typical for most people to say "Call me if you need anything." The problem is, grievers have no idea what they need and they don't like to trouble people, so they usually won't call. If you put some thought into it, you can figure out something you could do that could help. Where do you see a need? Childcare? Food? Cleaning? Repairs? Taking them out for a meal or fun? Running errands? There is so much you can do. If you need suggestions or want to understand your friend better, get a copy of my ***When Their World Stops: The Essential Guide to Truly Helping Anyone in Grief*** on [Amazon](#) or other online retailers. It is a quick and easy read that will help you with specific ways to help and understand your friend.

5. REMEMBER THEM AFTER THE SERVICE

After the memorial service or funeral, everyone goes back to their normal life while the grieving person is left with the results of a bomb going off in theirs. It is a confusing time, often overwhelming and depressing. This is when they are going to need your attention the most and this will be the time it is the hardest to give it as you will be busy. It will take a conscious effort to plan ahead to remember them. Mark it on your calendar or set reminders on your phone. I have a free downloadable pdf on my website, called the Do Not Forget List that can help you keep track of important dates to remember, like the loved one's birthday, anniversary, etc. I had one friend who took me out for dinner once a month for a many years after my husband died. She just made a commitment to do it and kept asking me. I loved those dinners. She made me feel very special. It could just be a phone call or a card. However you feel led to keep in touch with them and show them that they haven't been forgotten. If I had a #6, it would be to be patient and give the grieving person grace. They will probably hurt much more than you expect and for a much longer period of time than you think they should. You won't understand it. But they are normal. Thank you for caring enough about them to read this.