

Helping Those Who Grieve

Enter at your own risk
(but we pray you will)

PLEASE . . .

1. Know that we need you. We may not ask for help (we may be much too numb), but we need to know that you're there.
2. Know that we do not expect you to make us feel better—to take away our pain. Right now no one can. We need your support, your acceptance of our need to grieve, and your willingness to live with the helplessness you'll feel.
3. If you haven't called because you cannot handle our grief and your helplessness, say so. We can truly understand that, and we'll feel better than we would if you used excuses and made us think you didn't care.
4. Try to tolerate our anger, if you can. It's not really you or others who anger us; it's just that we lost what we loved. We pray you'll understand.
5. Don't try to stop our tears. Our tears may be hard on you, but they are a healthy way for us to release some of our pain. Crying is good for us; please try to sit with us and let us cry.
6. Don't try to cheer us up by comparing "worse" losses. Pain is pain, and ours must be acknowledged.
7. Don't tell us that what happened must have been "God's will". Hearing that brings us no consolation right now and only adds to the spiritual confusion and isolation we feel.
8. Don't expect that hearing "They're with God", should be all that matters to us. We may cling to that belief too, but we still ache to have them here with us, and we ache to know that they are safe.
9. Don't say, "It was better this way—better to not have had them longer". We ache for more time with them.
10. Don't say "I know how you feel". No one knows that. Please ask instead how we are today, how we feel.
11. Offer specific help . . . a meal, a laundry done, a free hour. We are deeply hurt to think very far ahead.
12. Don't tell us to put this behind us, forget, and get on with our lives. These are our lives. We need to grieve. We need to be ourselves, and we need not to forget, but to find a way to remember in peace.
13. Accept us in our grief, and we'll always remember the healing love that you offered us.

Author unknown