

DO THIS NOT THAT

HOW TO HELP A GRIEVING FRIEND

While there is no one perfect way to respond or to support someone you care about, here are some good ground rules.

DON'T

DON'T COMPARE GRIEFS

No one else has experienced their grief.

DON'T FACT CHECK OR CORRECT

Especially in early grief, facts and timelines can be confused.

DON'T MINIMIZE

Even if you might think their grief is out of proportion to the situation.

DON'T GIVE COMPLIMENTS

When someone is in pain, they don't need to be reminded how wonderful they are.

DON'T BE A CHEERLEADER.

When things are dark, it's OK to be dark.

DON'T TALK ABOUT "LATER"

Right now, in this present moment, that future is irrelevant.

DON'T EVANGELIZE

When something has worked for you, it's tempting to prescribe it for others.

DON'T START WITH SOLUTIONS

In most cases, people need to feel heard, not be "fixed."

DO

INSTEAD TRY

ASK QUESTIONS

You can connect by showing curiosity about their experience.

RESPECT THEIR EXPERIENCE

It's not important who's "more" correct.

REMEMBER THIS GRIEF IS THEIRS

Grief belongs to the griever. Your opinions are irrelevant.

TRUST YOUR FRIEND

All the things you love about the person will help them through this experience.

MIRROR THEIR REALITY

When they say, "This sucks," say, "Yes, it does."

STAY IN THE PRESENT MOMENT

Or if the person is talking about the past, join them there.

TRUST THEIR SELF-CARE

They know themselves best. What works for you may not be for them.

GET CONSENT

Before you offer advice or strategies.

SHOW UP. LISTEN. DON'T FIX.

ABOVE ALL, SHOW YOUR LOVE.

Be willing to stand beside the gaping hole that has opened in your friend's life, without flinching or turning away. Your steadiness of presence is the absolute best thing you can give.



REFUGE IN GRIEF

Emotionally Intelligent Grief Support
www.refugeingrief.com