

DO THIS NOT THAT

HOW TO HELP A GRIEVING FRIEND

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

@refugeingrief

DON'T

DO

INSTEAD TRY

DON'T COMPARE GRIEFS

No one else has experienced their grief.

ASK QUESTIONS

Connect by showing curiosity about their experience.

DON'T FACT CHECK OR CORRECT

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

RESPECT THEIR EXPERIENCE

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

DON'T MINIMIZE

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

REMEMBER THIS GRIEF IS THEIRS

Grief belongs to the griever. Your opinions are irrelevant.

DON'T GIVE COMPLIMENTS

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

TRUST YOUR FRIEND

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

DON'T BE A CHEERLEADER.

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

MIRROR THEIR REALITY

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

DON'T TALK ABOUT "LATER"

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

STAY IN THE PRESENT MOMENT

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

DON'T EVANGELIZE

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

TRUST THEIR SELF-CARE

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

DON'T START WITH SOLUTIONS

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

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.

REAL SUPPORT FOR REAL PEOPLE.

REFUGE
IN GRIEF