

Talking to someone who is grieving

Dying
Matters

It can be hard to talk to someone who is grieving.
You might worry about saying the wrong thing.

But there are lots of ways you can help.

How you can help



Look out for signs that the person wants to talk

They might mention the person who has died. Try to encourage them if they do.



Remember silence can help

Sometimes people just want to sit in silence.
Let the person know you are there to talk when they want to.



Remember the person might not want to talk

Try not to get upset if this happens. It is hard to talk after losing someone.



Do not worry if the person repeats themselves

They might find it helps to go over things a few times.



Give people space

Often people need time alone after losing someone.

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Things that might help them

There is no perfect way to help. Try not to put yourself under pressure. It is great that you are there.

Open ended questions can help. Those are questions that do not have a yes or no answer.

Practical support can help too. You could offer to pick up kids from school or go shopping.

It can help to keep checking the person is OK. Times like birthdays and anniversaries can be difficult. It can help to invite people to come out with you. You could go for a coffee or a walk.

And remember, people might say they are OK when they are unhappy. Keep telling them you are there for them.

Things that might not help

Saying you know how the person feels might not help. Everyone feels differently when someone dies.

Saying things like 'Time is a healer' might not help. Everyone grieves at their own speed.

Try not to take over the conversation. And try not to act as if nothing has happened. Lots of people get upset by that.

If you are religious, remember your faith might not help other people.

Websites for more support

You can find more information at these websites. They all have advice for people who are grieving.

- Hospice UK hospiceuk.org/get-bereavement-support
- Cruse Bereavement Care cruse.org.uk
- The Compassionate Friends

Hospices in your area will also have information on where to get help.



Dying Matters is a campaign run by

