

1. Be an **active listener**. Use body language and gestures to show that you are listening.
2. Don't just sympathize, **empathize**. Feel **with** the griever instead of feeling **for** the griever.
3. Show **compassion**. Let the person feel their emotions and do not show judgment.
4. **Acknowledge** their grief, do not try to fix it.
5. Avoid looking on the bright side. **Do not** use the phrase "**at least...**" as this could show a lack of understanding their emotion.
6. Show **support**. Be there in person or just a phone call away.
7. **Avoid** sharing your own experience. This could devalue the grief the person is experiencing.
8. Sit with the person and provide comfort. Just **your presence** can help the person grieve and feel like they're not alone.

Healgrief.org recommends using these phrases:

"I can only begin to imagine what you are going through."

"I'm here to listen if you want to talk."

"What are some things that bring you comfort?"

"Are there times of the day that are easier or harder for you?"

"It's ok to feel this way, it's part of loving someone and grieving for them. What you feel is normal and appropriate."

Try to avoid clichés such as:

"Everything happens for a reason."

"He/she is in a better place now."

"It was meant to be."



How to Accept Help When YOU are the One Grieving

1. Take people up on offers to help, ***you are not a burden!***
2. Help can be ***mutually beneficial***; the person who wants to help may also be feeling emotional and allowing them to help you can have a positive emotional impact.
3. If someone offers to help you with errands, childcare, or other tasks, ***accept the help***. They would not be offering if they did not want to help you. Don't feel ashamed; it's ok to not be ok.
4. Understand that grief is a ***process*** and it takes time. We all experience emotions differently, and it's important to know that what we are feeling is normal. Let yourself ***feel*** vulnerable, frustrated, sad, and any other emotion that is wrapped up inside of you.
5. Accepting help ***does not show weakness***. Allow yourself to know that people care for you, and their offer to help is not meant to make you feel inferior.
6. Practice ***self-care***. Take time for yourself and continue to do the things you enjoy (when you are ready).

If you don't feel like you need help, examine your reasons for not wanting to accept help.

- Do you feel undeserving? Why?
- Do you feel too vulnerable?
- Are you afraid of how people will view you?

Examining these beliefs can help you realize that it's ok to ask for and accept help.