



TRELLIS  
Supportive Care

Palliative • Hospice • Family Support

## When Someone You Care About is Grieving

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- ❖ Be there for your friend, even when you don't understand.
- ❖ Be a source of comfort by listening, laughing, and crying.
- ❖ Stick close to your friend and defend his/her right to grieve.
- ❖ Allow your friend to make mistakes, or at least to grieve differently from the way you have grieved or would grieve.
- ❖ Send flowers. Send money if you know it would help and would not offend.
- ❖ Send cards. The message doesn't need to be long. Just let your friend know you haven't forgotten him/her. Send one every few weeks.
- ❖ Call your friend. Don't worry about being a bother. Let your friend tell you if he/she doesn't want to talk about the loss right now.
- ❖ Answering machines and email are great ways to keep in touch. The bereaved person can respond when feeling up to it.
- ❖ Try to anticipate what your friend may need. Bereaved persons sometimes don't know what to ask for.
- ❖ Avoid offering easy answers and platitudes. This only invalidates grief. Be patient. Don't try to rush your friend through grief.
- ❖ Give your friend permission to grieve in front of you. Don't change the subject or tell him/her not to cry and do not act uncomfortable when he/she does cry.
- ❖ Ask questions, but don't tell them how they should feel.
- ❖ Invite your friend to attend events as you normally would. Let your friend decide if he/she wants to attend.
- ❖ Don't assume because your friend is having a good day that it means he/she is over the loss.
- ❖ Be mindful of holidays, birthdays and anniversaries, which are often particularly difficult days.