

HEARTLINKS GRIEF CENTER

HELPING PEOPLE YOU LOVE IN TIMES OF CHANGE



Don't walk in front of me. I may not follow. Don't walk behind me. I may not lead. Walk beside me and just be my friend. ~Albert Camus

Be there - With support and presence over time, but limit advice-giving

Listen - Without judgment or interruption

Anticipate and initiate - Plan, arrange, and organize ways to help your loved one without being asked. They may be too tired, overwhelmed, or embarrassed to ask

Avoid cliches and stories - "I'm sorry," "I care," and "I'm thinking of you" are better choices than "I know how you feel", or "My second cousin's aunt had cancer and..."

Silence is golden - Silence can express trust and acceptance when no words can bring comfort

Express and accept expressions of feelings - Without judgments

Help them find support and encouragement - Find support groups and attend together

Allow them to go at their own pace - There is no right "speed" or order to dealing with life-changing events

Be patient - With your loved one and yourself

Provide times of lightheartedness - Initiate laughter, fun, and silliness

Believe tenaciously in their strength and ability to heal - Tell them!

Marvel at the way they cope - "You constantly amaze me," "I am so proud of the way you _____," are good ways to open conversation