

Help Someone in Grief

The most fundamental ways to help someone who is grieving are:

- Listen. Helping begins with your ability to be an active listener. Your physical presence and desire to listen without judging are critical helping tools. Don't worry so much about what you will say. Just concentrate on listening to the words that are being shared with you.
- Have compassion. Give the person who is grieving permission to express their feelings without fear of criticism or judgment. Try to learn and understand. Don't instruct or set expectations.
- Be there. Your ongoing and reliable presence is the most important gift you can give. While you cannot take the pain away (nor should you try to), you can enter into it by being there for the griever. Remain available in the weeks, months, and years to come.

“Being a real friend to someone who is grieving isn't easy. But I promise that if you commit to being present to someone in grief, companionship through what might be his darkest hours, you will be rewarded with the deep satisfaction of having helped a fellow human being heal.

“Thank you for making the world a better place.” — Dr. Alan Wolfelt