



# GRIEVING: *How to Help*

BY GUNDERSON LIFE CELEBRATION CENTERS

Losing someone close to you is never easy. Death is inevitable, but we're never truly prepared for it.

When someone you know loses a person close to them, it can be hard to find the right words. Instead of focusing on saying just the right thing, focus on understanding what not to say; it could be the best way to help someone grieve.

## What Not to Do or Say

1. Don't isolate them. Your tone of speech is very important in how you make someone feel. But don't be a sensationalist; you don't want your friend to feel like their pain is the source of gossip. It's okay to show them you're also sad, which will provide comfort and let them know they're not alone.
2. Don't be afraid to talk about both the positive and negative. While you want to be positive and focus on the good, focusing solely on the positive, especially in the beginning stages of grieving, can make a friend feel like their grief isn't validated and the process is being softened. Don't be afraid to state how hard it is; it's okay to point out the light at the end of the

tunnel and acknowledge the gravity of the current situation at the same time.

3. Don't compare your experiences to theirs unless appropriate. While everyone goes through this at some point, it doesn't make the process easier by comparing it to someone else's experience. A death is hard, and comparing experiences, even if they are similar, may belittle the other person's situation.
4. Don't diminish someone's grief. Acknowledgement is one of the best ways to show your support. It's okay to talk about the deceased and to openly speak about the

situation, but be careful not to unintentionally diminish the person's grief by saying things like "everything is going to be okay" or "you'll be fine." The greatest way you to honor someone's grief is to ask how they feel and simply listen. Trying to downplay the pain by minimizing it will likely only make them feel more disconnected.

5. Don't wait to reach out. While it's never easy for those going through the grieving process, knowing friends are there and ready to listen can make coping with a loss a little bit easier. A message as simple as "I'm thinking of you" can go a long way in helping them heal.

Losing someone can be difficult to reconcile. Whether someone loses their spouse, sibling, friend, or even a pet, it's terrible, and they'll need a healthy grieving process to get through. Providing emotional support by listening to treasured memories, allowing them to cry, and letting them know you're there for them during one of the most difficult times of their life can be the best thing you can do for them.

Submitted by Gunderson Life Celebration Centers.

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## DO-NOT-RESUSCITATE BRACELETS

Direct emergency medical technicians, first responders, and emergency healthcare facilities' personnel. See also the Advance Healthcare Directives in the Essential Preparation section or Legal in the General section to set up advance healthcare directives which can detail your wishes when you are unable.

DO-NOT-RESUSCITATE  
BRACELETS (DNR) INFO  
(608) 266-1568  
[dhs.wisconsin.gov/ems/dnr.htm](http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/ems/dnr.htm)

## FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES

FOSTER FUNERAL &  
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Dedicated to meeting the wishes of the families we serve. Our priority is to provide personalized and meaningful celebrations of life at a fair value. We offer the comfort and attention our clients deserve, and support them in one of the most difficult times in their lives.

## GRIEF & SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

AGRACE  
(608) 276-4660  
[agrace.org/griefgroups](http://agrace.org/griefgroups)

