

ACKNOWLEDGING YOUR LOSS

Sharing your story of loss is a healthy way to process grief. Talking about your experience can help you reflect on your feelings, accept the reality of the loss, and begin your healing journey.

When you feel ready, answer the questions below. Skip any that don't apply. Write your answers in a journal, on your computer, or in your phone. Keep them for yourself or share with a friend, family member, counselor, or care team member.

1. What was the name of the person who died?
2. What was their relationship to you?
3. What was your relationship with the person like?
4. Were you with the person when they died, or how did you hear about their death?
5. What was your initial reaction to hearing about their death?
6. What are your strongest emotions right now?
7. Are there emotions you may be avoiding?
8. What physical symptoms did you feel when the person died or when you found out about the loss?
9. What has changed in your daily routine now that the person is no longer here?
10. What will you miss most about the person?
11. Is there anything about the person you won't miss?
12. Is there anything you regret doing or saying (or not doing or saying) before the person died? What would you tell the person now if they could hear you?

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Contact us with questions
or for more support.

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YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

Your support network—family, friends, coworkers, care team members, and other professionals—can be invaluable in early grief. It is especially important to reach out for help if you are involved in tasks like planning the funeral, taking care of the person’s belongings or home, or settling legal and financial matters.

Make an effort to reach out to your support network to help ease the burden. Have a trusted person help you write names and contact information below as a reminder of who you can rely on. Assign tasks whenever you can to give yourself moments to rest.

NAME	RELATIONSHIP / ROLE	PHONE # / EMAIL



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HELPING OTHERS HELP YOU

Below is a list to guide others in supporting you during early grief. Have a trusted person help you check what would help you, cross out what will not, and add your other needs in the blank spaces. Share this page with anyone who offers to help.

Being present for someone who is grieving...

- Express sympathy.** *"I'm so sorry for your loss."* *"My heart goes out to you."*
- Acknowledge grief.** *"I can't imagine how hard this is."* *"Take as much time as you need."*
- Listen** without judging, interrupting, or giving advice.
- Share a story** or fond memory you have of the person who died.
- Keep in touch.** Check back in each week or month with a text, call, or visit.
- If you don't know what to say, just be there.** Sometimes your presence is enough.
- Other ways to be present:

When offering to help...

- Be specific, instead of just asking how you can help.** Someone who is grieving may need help, but might not be able to tell you what they need. *"May I visit, or do you need time alone?"* *"Can I drop off dinner tomorrow?"* *"Can I put your garbage bins out?"*

Check to see if there are other things you can help with, such as:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking or delivering meals | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet care, feeding, walking, grooming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Light housekeeping, dishes, laundry, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Errands, getting meds, mail, groceries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Light home repairs, lawn care, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial service or funeral planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare or school pickups/drop-offs | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with bills, insurance, legal docs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other ways to help: | |

Things to avoid...

- Minimizing or rushing grief.** *"They're in a better place."* *"You need to be strong."*
- Focusing on yourself.** *"I know how you feel."* *"When I lost [Name], I [personal story]."*
- Unintended insensitivity.** *"At least you have another child."* *"It was their time."*
- Distancing yourself,** pretending everything's fine, or changing topics if grief comes up.
- Trying to "fix" grief,** offer unsolicited advice, or talk about unresolved issues.
- Other things to avoid:

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