

## **How to help someone who is suffering from a loss**

DO let your genuine concern and caring show.

DO be available to listen or to help with whatever seems to be needed at the time.

DO say you are sorry about what happened and about their pain.

DO allow them to express as much unhappiness as they are feeling or are willing to share.

DO encourage them to be patient with themselves, not to expect too much of themselves.

DO allow them to talk about their loss as much and as often as they want to.

DO talk about the special and endearing qualities of the person they have lost.

DO reassure them that they did everything they could.

DON'T let your own sense of helplessness keep you from reaching out.

DON'T avoid them because you're uncomfortable; this adds more pain to a painful situation.

DON'T say you know how they feel unless you have experienced their loss yourself.

DON'T make any comments that suggest the loss is their fault. They have enough guilt/doubt!

DON'T say they should be feeling better by now or anything that judges their feelings.

DON'T tell them what they should feel or do.

DON'T change the subject when they mention their loved one or loss.

DON'T avoid mentioning their loss out of fear of reminding them of their pain; they remember.

DON'T try to find something positive in the situation like a moral lesson or closer family ties.

DON'T point out at least they have their other child/sibling/parent, etc.

DON'T say they can always have another child/marriage, etc.

DON'T suggest what they should be grateful for.