

Help Them Help You

Use this sheet to create the content of your grief letter.

What do you wish your friends, family, and coworkers understood about you and your grief? What helpful advice could you give to them? By taking the time to consider the following statements, what we do and don't want or need becomes more apparent. As you know what you need, you can share it with them verbally or in a letter.

Remember: The greatest gift is sharing memories

Let me know when you are hurting or missing them too. The worst is thinking I am alone in my grief.

Help me to honor them in some meaningful way.

Allow me to cry, laugh or leave when I need to. It's important for me feel the emotions I am feeling, even though this is considered the season of cheer.

Allow traditions to change to accommodate the missing space.

Allow me to say no to invitations.

Allow me to change my mind often.

Remember that much of what I do is a reflection of my grief not my feelings about the holidays or my friends and families.

Though I am hurt I still love and care.

Ignoring my grief does not make it go away.

If you not sure, please ask me

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Sometimes it may appear that I'm functioning fine and that I'm doing well. Understand that outward appearances can be deceiving.

Don't make comments about next year being better or time healing my wounds; my concerns are in the here and now

Understand that I can't do everything I used to do in holidays past, but don't hesitate to invite me to holiday events anyway

Let me cry if I need to. You don't have to say anything – just hand me tissues and be there for me.

Understand that grief can go on for a number of years. There is not established time limit. Please don't make judgments about how long it's taking me to grieve.

Don't tell me you know how I feel.

Don't try to say something positive about my loved one's death, like "he's in a better place" or "at least you had many good years together"

Be patient with me and lower your expectations for me

Don't tell me what to do, what I need or what to read please. It doesn't help.
