

The Compassionate Memorialist

How You Can Help Me

**Taken & Modified from an Original Post on www.youngwidow.org
Original Author Unknown**

Please talk about my loved one, even though they are gone. It is more comforting to cry than to pretend they never existed. I need to talk about them, and I need to do it over and over.

Be patient with my agitation. Nothing feels secure in my world. Get comfortable with my crying. Sadness hits me in waves, and I never know when my tears may flow. Just sit with me in silence and hold my hand- you do not need to say anything at all, for words will not ease the pain.

Please Don't Abandon Me

Don't abandon me with the excuse that you don't want to upset me. You can't catch my grief. My world is painful, and when you are too afraid to say anything, you isolate me at a time when I most need to be cared about. If you don't know what to say, just come over, give me a hug or touch my arm, and gently say, "I'm sorry." You can even say, "I just don't know what to say, but I care, and want you to know that."

Just because I look good does not mean that I feel good. Ask me how I feel only if you really have time to find out.

I am not strong- just numb. When you tell me I am strong, I feel that you don't see me.

I Will Never Recover

I will not recover. This is not a cold or the flu. I'm not sick- I'm grieving and that's different. My grieving may only begin 6 months after my loved one's death. Don't think that I will be over it in a year. For I am not only grieving their death, but also the person I was when I was with them; the life that we shared, the plans we had, the places we will never get to go together, and the hopes and dreams that will never come true. My whole world has crumbled, and I will never be the same.

I will not always be grieving as intensely, but I will never forget my loved one. [Rather than recover, I want to incorporate their life and love into the rest of my life.](#) They are a part of me and always will be. Sometimes I will remember them with joy and other times with a tear. Both are okay.

I don't have to accept their death. Yes, I must understand that it has happened, and it is real, but there are some things in life that are just not acceptable.

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I feel even more lost and alone when you tell me what I should be doing. Please don't make me feel worse by telling me I am not doing this right.

If I have lost my child, please don't remind me that I have other children to tend to. If I have lost a partner or spouse, please don't remind me I may find someone else. What makes you think people are replaceable? They aren't.

My Roles Have Changed

I don't even understand what you mean when you say, "You've got to get on with your life." My life *is* going on. I have been forced to take on many new responsibilities and roles. It may not look the way you think it should. This will take time and I will never be my old self again. So please, just love me as I am today and know that with your love and support, the joy will slowly return to my life. But I will never forget and there will always be times that I cry.

I need to know that you care about me. I need to feel your touch, your hugs. Just be present with me. I need to know you believe in me and in my ability to get through my grief in my own way, and in my own time.

I Don't Know What I Need

Please don't say, "Call me if you need anything." I'll never call you because I have no idea what I need. Trying to figure out what you could do for me takes more energy than I have. So, in advance, let me give you some ideas:

- Bring food or send a care package. Little reminders that you care mean the world to me. Do not expect an immediate "thank you"- my world is crazy and I am overwhelmed.
- Send me a card on special holidays, special dates, and/or the anniversary of my loved one's death. And, please, be sure to mention my loved one's name. I long to know they are remembered. The tears are here and I will love you for giving me the opportunity to shed them because someone cared enough about me to reach out on this difficult day.
- Ask me more than once to join you at a movie or lunch or dinner. I may say no at first or even for a while, but please don't give up on me. Somewhere down the line, I may be ready, and if you've given up then I really will be alone.
- Understand how difficult it is for me to be surrounded by those who remind me of my loss, to walk into events alone, to go home alone, to feel out of place in the same situations where I used to feel so comfortable.

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Please Don't Judge Me

Please don't judge me now - or think that I'm behaving strangely. Remember I am grieving. I may even be in shock or feel afraid. Feelings of deep rage or guilt may surface. But above all, I simply hurt. The pain I feel is a pain unlike any I've ever felt before. It can't be understood or imagined by anyone who has not walked in my shoes.

Don't worry if you think I'm getting better and then suddenly I seem to slip backward. Grief makes me behave this way at times. And please don't tell me you know how I feel, or that it's time for me to get on with my life. What I need now is time to grieve.

Thank you for Loving Me

Most of all thank you for being my friend. Thank you for your patience and for your caring. For the help you provide and the understanding you have- thank you. Above all, thank you for keeping me in your thoughts and prayers.