

# How to Support the Bereaved

## COPING WITH LOSS DURING THE PANDEMIC

GRIEF  
SPACE

Support Practices Adapted for this Challenging Era



www.InternationalGriefInstitute.com

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Grief is a long, lonely journey, and ongoing support from friends and family can make a big difference. When you can't physically be there, here are some helpful ways to show you care.

### WAYS TO HELP

- ♥ Say their loved one's name. It doesn't hurt, it helps.
- ♥ Attend (or offer to arrange) a virtual memorial or Shiva minyan, or dedicate a virtual mass in memory of the deceased.
- ♥ Make sure the immediate family doesn't have to worry about making meals. Contribute to (or organize) meal delivery. Try [signupgenius.com](http://signupgenius.com) or [Mealtrain.com](http://Mealtrain.com) to coordinate volunteers.
- ♥ Send a meal from a local restaurant using GrubHub, DoorDash, or the restaurant's delivery service.
- ♥ Order groceries for delivery or call and say "Sending you an Amazon order of \_\_\_\_; what else do you need?"
- ♥ Send flowers to the family instead of the funeral home.
- ♥ Instead of sending flowers, send stamps for all the thank-you cards.
- ♥ Ship [a book about loss with personal dedication](#).
- ♥ Send a gift card or donate to the family's GoFundMe to help with costs.
- ♥ Order [customized memorial art](#) and/or a picture frame to hold their loved one's photo.
- ♥ Schedule a sidewalk or window visit, social distance visit, virtual yoga, Pilates or exercise class together.
- ♥ Send a soft shirt, scarf or blanket with a comforting note suggesting they wrap themselves in it when they need a hug from you.

### WHAT TO KNOW

- ✓ Don't ask them to be strong. Hiding pain slows the healing.
- ✓ Grief is as unique as a fingerprint. Try not to compare or judge journeys.
- ✓ Brain fog, confusion, and inability to concentrate are normal. Have patience.



### WHAT TO SAY

**Acknowledge the pain and sorrow, and help the mourner feel loved.**

"I'm so very sorry."

"Your loved one was very special and will be missed."

"Tell me a favorite story about your loved one."

"My heart hurts for you."

"I've been thinking of you. How are you sleeping?"



### REMEMBER

**You can't fix someone's sorrow but you can support them on their grief journey.**

- ❖ Invite them to talk about their loss, and just listen.
- ❖ Be patient; grief has no schedule.
- ❖ Crying is normal and healthy.
- ❖ Stay in touch. Call, text or email regularly, even if they don't reply.
- ❖ Reach out on trigger days: birthdays, holidays and anniversaries.