



In cooperation with Highmark Healthy High 5, an initiative of the Highmark Foundation, a tax-exempt, private foundation that supports initiatives and programs to improve the health and quality of life of the communities it serves.



Tip Sheet

How Can You Help a Family Member or Friend in Need?

Be There

Be there to listen if they want to talk about the person who died.

Be there to sit with them even when they don't feel like talking.

Be there to offer a hug when they need it.

Be there—visit, call, send an e-mail, a text message or a card, invite them somewhere.

Be there and just be yourself.

Be There

If someone you know has experienced the death of someone they love, here are a few things that can be helpful for you to know about what they might be going through:

- **A Swirl of Emotions**—When someone dies, people often feel many different feelings—sadness, anger, relief, confusion, and many more.... Your friend may feel sad one day and angry the next, or scared and alone and full of guilt one after the other throughout one day, or even sad and relieved at the same time.
- **They Want To Remember**—Talking about the person who died can be comforting—even if they cry as they do it.
- **Drained of Energy**—When a person is grieving, usually their energy level is lower than normal.
- **They Need Support**—It does matter if you go to the funeral home, even if you don't know what to say—your presence can mean a great deal.
- **Feelings That Last**—The feelings of grief will come and go for your friend for a long time—usually longer than you expect.
- **Many Layers of Complexity**—Besides missing the person who died, your friend is surrounded by others whom he or she loves and who are grieving too—adding to his or her confusion and sadness.

Remember, what you say or do isn't as important as just being there for your friend. It's difficult—but it can make a big difference in how they feel.

“A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out.”



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