

Supporting Others When You Are Grieving

Know Your Limitations – don't forget to take care of yourself and your needs!

- Set boundaries – What boundaries are appropriate for this situation? How can you set the appropriate boundaries?
 1. Do you have a hard time saying no?
 2. How can you set appropriate boundaries so your needs are still met?
 3. Are there ways I am trying to help that make me feel uncomfortable or overwhelmed?
- Be prepared to feel your grief feelings
 - When you help others with their grief you may find yourself uncovering and reexperiencing your own grief feelings and grief experiences as well.
 - These feelings you feel may be anger, guilt, frustration, regret, sadness – they can be a mix of grief feelings you have felt before or new ones to you.
- Recognize your limitations
 - So many times, people need more support than you can provide.
 - If you are noticing feelings that are overwhelming and overpowering that make you feel more help is needed, have them seek professional help - a licensed mental health professional, their doctor, a pastor.

Things To Remember –

- No two losses are the same, even when it is the same person that died.
- Things that are comforting to one person to hear may not be comforting to another person. Every loss is different and so is every griever!
- The person may not take your advice and support – that doesn't mean you aren't doing a good job supporting - ***“your desire to help may not always be compatible with someone else's desire to be helped.”***
 - Remember – Some people would rather not talk. Some people would rather be alone. Some people are not willing to accept help. Some people need professional support.

You are giving a gift when you choose to support others, ESPECIALLY when you are grieving and hurting.

- People like to be listened to.
- People like to have someone who tries to understand.
- People like to have someone who will be there long term – after the initial death when others have “returned to their lives” a continuing presence is powerful.
- People like to talk to someone who is nonjudgmental.