



North Star: 760.873.4206

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We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of three youth in the Bishop community. North Star Counseling Center is offering individual, group and family counseling through this challenging time. Please contact us for more information. *If you notice your own symptoms related to grieving from this event present for a prolonged period of time please contact a school staff or mental health professional.

There are many ways to experience and process grief. Here are a few tips as we respect your personal, family and cultural approach to healing after the death of a friend or loved one. Please use and share these resources, drawing sheets and self care information.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP A YOUTH?

There is no perfect way to handle grief. Death is hard for all of us, and can stir up our own fear and pain. Encourage self care. Be prepared. If you rush to comfort, tell an adolescent not to cry, or even snap at an adolescent in a moment of tension, you can always apologize and reconnect. Don't expect a single tell all moment from a youth. Acknowledge the intensity of the loss. Be Attentive. Answer their questions as best as you can. Stay Present. When you think about it, the hardest thing we ever do in life is to sit with another person in pain and just provide comfort through our presence. By not rushing to make the pain go away, you allow healing to begin. Provide structure. It's important to provide a sense of continuity and stability during a time of disruption and/or crisis. Recognize that some teens may need to return quickly to a normal routine while others may need more time to grieve. Don't forget to use your own peers, friends and relatives for support.

WHAT DO I DO WITH MY FEELINGS?

Remember that you will also have your own feelings about the death of a community member. It is important to understand your own feelings and get support for yourself. Acknowledging your own feelings can increase your empathy for your teen, as well as help to recognize your limits. While at times it's important to express your own feelings about the loss, try to refrain from judging your teen for his/her reactions. For example, it is not helpful to dismiss the anger if you feel sad, nor is it helpful to disregard feelings of sadness if you feel angry.

COMMON REACTIONS TO DEATH AND GRIEF:

Difficulty concentrating (brain fog), easily agitated /upset, fear/anxiety about loved ones wellbeing, difficulty eating & sleeping, experiencing waves of emotion, decrease in overall interest

REMINDERS TO SUPPORT YOURSELF AND THOSE AROUND YOU:

Be aware of how social media is impacting you and take breaks as needed

Self care is effective in caring for yourself and others

Go for a walk

Take a nap

Hang with a good friend

Listen to music

Creating a playlist and share with friends

Grounding Activity (name 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, 1 thing you can taste)

Make yourself a cup of tea or hot chocolate

Engage in meaningful cultural & or spiritual practices

Move your body (dance, hike, walk, stretch)

Practice kindness & understanding towards yourself & those around you

Structure & routine can be helpful

LOCAL RESOURCES AND CRISIS INFORMATION:

Local On-Going Mental Health Support

North Star Counseling Center: 760.873.4206

Toyiabe Family Services: 760.873.6394

Inyo Co Crisis 1.800.841.5011

Text HOME to 741-741 to reach a crisis counselor

Text START to 678-678 to reach a counselor

Trevor Project Crisis Line 1-866-488-7386

National Suicide Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255

The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Ease your state of mind in stressful moments.



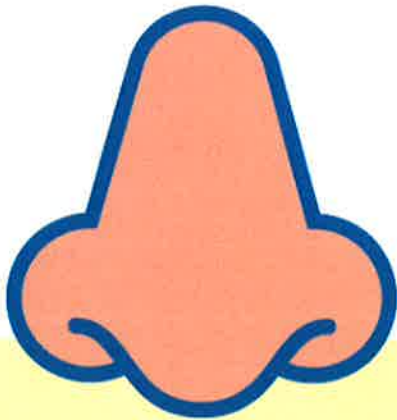
Acknowledge **5** things
that you can see
around you.



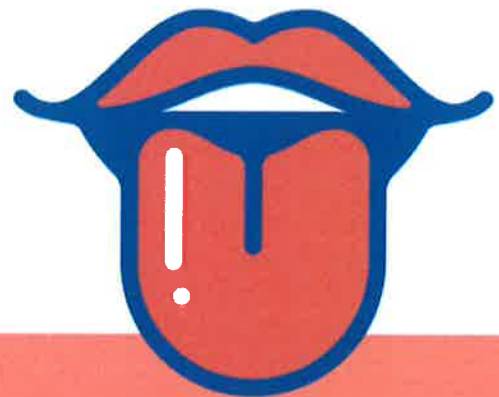
Acknowledge **4** things
that you can touch
around you.



Acknowledge **3** things
that you can hear
around you.



Acknowledge **2** things
that you can smell
around you.



Acknowledge **1** thing
that you can taste
around you.

KIDS YOGA



TREE POSE



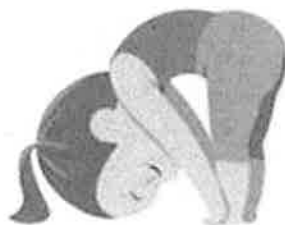
CAMEL POSE



LORD OF THE DANCE POSE



CHAIR POSE



BIG TOE POSE



TRIANGLE POSE



BOW POSE



BOAT POSE



SCORPION POSE



DOWN DOG POSE



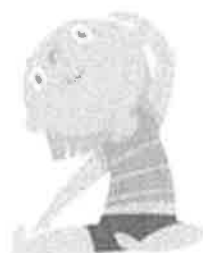
WARRIOR POSE



PLANK POSE



COW POSE



SEATED SIDE POSE



WARRIOR 2 POSE



LUNGE POSE

YOUR FRIEND IS GRIEVING

TIPS FOR SUPPORTING THEM



You're likely reading this because someone you're close to is grieving. Whether they had a parent, sibling, partner, close friend, or other family member die, you might be wondering what to say or do and not say or do. Grief is confusing, both for those grieving and for those who care about them. It can feel awkward, scary, uncomfortable, confusing, and surreal. Just as you might not know what to do or say, people who are grieving often aren't sure what they need. That's why *"Let me know if I can do anything"* can be hard to hear. If you've already said that, it's okay — almost everyone does.

This tip sheet is a collection of suggestions from grieving kids, teens and young adults. They share specific things you can do and say to be supportive. Note: grief is as unique as we are, so not all of these suggestions will fit for your particular friend. Pick the ones you think might be helpful — or you can show them this tip sheet and talk about what they think would work for them.

WHAT DOES GRIEF LOOK LIKE? IT'S WAY MORE THAN JUST SADNESS...

Anything and everything — and sometimes nothing at all. Just because someone is grieving, doesn't mean you'll be able to tell by what they look like or how they are acting. If you've heard that someone in their life died, believe it and don't question it. Grief looks different for everyone and can be affected by things like someone's age, their relationship with the person who died, religious/not religious background, gender, culture, ethnicity, and everything else that goes into the unique constellation that is your friend. You can best help your friend by supporting however they are expressing their grief, as long as they aren't hurting themselves or someone else.

If you are worried that your friend is thinking about hurting or killing themselves, reach out to someone you trust for help. You can also call 1-800-273-TALK to get additional support.

WHERE TO START

Put down the toolbox. Your friend doesn't need you to fix them or their grief, which is good because grief can't be fixed! What they do need is for you to show up, stick around, act normal, and listen. Sounds easy right? It can be, and sometimes even people with the best intentions avoid the person who is grieving because they don't know what to do or say. Death and grief can make people really uncomfortable, so there's a good chance your friend is having to deal with other people's feelings about *their* feelings. You can make a difference by being the friend who listens without making it about you.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOWING UP – AND ACTING NORMAL

After a death, everything in your friend's world likely feels new and strange. Kids, teens, and young adults say they appreciated the friends who continued to text, call, and just hang out with them. They might say no (because grief takes a LOT of energy) but don't take it personally. They want to be there for you too, but it might look different for a while. You can also give your friend a free pass to say no or to not even respond.

"Hey — no need to reply. Just wanted to send you this ridiculous picture of puppies playing in the mud. I'm here."

"It's okay to say no, but Hayden and I are going to a show on Friday, want to go with us?"

CHECKING IN

The question, "How are you?" can be hard to answer for a grieving person. If you want to ask your friend how they are, be sure you have the time and energy to listen to the real answer. Reaching out to your friend helps them feel less alone, so here are some other ways to ask how they're doing that might be a little easier for them to answer.

- How are you in this moment?
- How's your grief been behaving lately?
- What would be most helpful from me right now?

We want to hang out and be normal. We also want to talk about the people in our lives who died without it having to always be sad and serious — sometimes it is — but a lot of the time we want to tell stories and memories that make us laugh, smile, or feel close to them.

HOW TO LISTEN. LIKE REALLY REALLY LISTEN

Listening is more than not talking. Here are ways to communicate you're truly paying attention.

Put away any distractions like phones and laptops. Talking about grief is tough and many grieving people worry that other people can't handle what they're saying, so any sign you're looking for something else to do might make it seem like it's not safe to share.

Go light on the questions. Asking a lot of detailed questions can leave your friend feeling like they're on the witness stand.

Hold off on giving advice or suggestions. It's hard when friends are in pain. The urge to give advice comes from a compassionate place of wanting someone to feel better, but unless your friend asks for advice, it's best to hold off on telling them what you think they should do. If you're not sure if your friend is looking for suggestions, you can ask "Do you just want to vent or are you looking for ideas?"

Be okay with silence. Grief isn't easy to put into words, so try getting comfortable with long pauses in the conversation. It might feel awkward at first, but it gets easier!



You know those casual comments people make with words like “dead” or “kill”? They can be really painful for your friend who is grieving.

Try to avoid saying things like:

- “This class is killing me.”
- “You gave me a heart attack.”
- “You’re killing me/he’s killing it.”
- “I wish my (mom/dad/brother/sister/ anyone) would just die, my life would be so much better.”
It can also be hard for your friend to hear people complaining about the people in their life. If your friend’s mom died and your mom is still in your life, be aware of how you talk about her in front of your friend.
- Making gestures like hanging or shooting yourself or someone else
- “I feel like dying/I could kill myself right now.” — **AND** — If you’re having thoughts of suicide, please say something to someone you trust and ask for help. 1-800-273-TALK.

AND WHAT CAN I DO?

You’ve already got *show up, listen, and act normal* on the list of ways to be helpful. But what else can you do? Grief can leave people feeling exhausted and overwhelmed. Helping with specific tasks on your friend’s to-do list means less work for them and a chance to spend time together.

Potential ideas

- Help clean their room/apartment/office — maybe the closet too?!
- Deliver groceries. *If you’re a kid or a teen, ask the adults in your life for help if needed.*
- Help them study or work on a project. Grief can make concentrating extra tough.
- Bring them their favorite snack.
- Invite them for a sleepover/sleep over at their house.
- Take their dog for a walk or scoop out their cat’s litter box (gross, we know).
- Ask their least favorite chore and do it with or for them once or twice a week.
- Organize a game or movie night for them and a few close friends.

SO WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

With that list of what not to say, you might be wondering, “Well, what should I say?” Everyone is different, so there’s no perfect thing to say, but here are some ideas.

NOPE

I’m sorry for your loss.

I know what you’re going through.

Are you still grieving?/Aren’t you over it yet?

I know how you feel, my grandmother died last year.

You’re just so sad lately.

YES!

I heard about your dad, I’m here for talking, not talking, taking a break...etc.

Grief is so different for everyone, what’s it been like for you?

There is no grief timeline — I won’t get tired of hearing about yours.

Everyone’s grief is different, just wanted you to know that I’ve had someone die too. It’s not the same, but I get it on some level.

Want to hangout this weekend?

HERE ARE OTHER REQUESTS FROM GRIEVING PEOPLE:

Sometimes I worry my memories of my person will fade. If you knew them, offer to write down or tell me stories you have of the person so I can add them to my memory bank.

Please don't compare my grief to anyone else's — a grandparent is not a parent and a sibling is not an uncle.

Only offer to help if you can and will follow through.

Don't try to fix, change, or cheer me up (unless I specifically ask). Let me have my feelings, even if they are messy.

Sometimes just listening and not saying anything at all is the best way to help.

Please, no pity.

Avoid the "You poor thing voice" — you can use your normal voice even if I'm crying.

Ask me about my person who died, rather than the details of the death.

Try your best to stay calm and present.

Ask me what I liked to do with my person who died and offer to do it with me.

GREAT, NOW I'M EXHAUSTED

Grief takes energy and so does supporting a friend who is grieving. Intense feelings and thoughts might come up for you as you listen to your friend, so it's important to have people who can be there for you. Friends, family, teachers, counselors, and even animals can be good sources of support. As you care for your friend, make sure you care for yourself by eating nourishing food, drinking water, moving your body, remembering to laugh and have fun, and anything else that helps you feel like yourself (art, music, writing, sports).



Thank you for taking time to read through this tip sheet and to be there for your friend who is grieving. If you have any questions, please contact us at 503.775.5683 or help@dougy.org.



NOW WHAT?

TIPS FOR GRIEVING TEENS



We're guessing you're here because someone in your life has died. Whether it was a parent, sibling, grandparent, close friend, boyfriend/girlfriend, or other family member, we're glad you found your way to this tip sheet.

The information here comes directly from the grieving teens we've worked with in our peer support groups, because they get it more than anyone.

Grief can get messy. When someone dies, most of us don't know what to do, how to talk about it, or even how we're supposed to feel. It's confusing and strange. It can be awkward to try to connect with other people about grief. Have you ever told someone that your person died and they give you a weird look or ask if you're joking? Not great, right?

THE LOW DOWN ON GRIEF

One thing we've learned from other teens who have had someone die is grief usually does what it wants — it doesn't follow any rules or keep to a schedule. There's no recipe and there isn't a right or wrong way to grieve. What matters most is figuring out what really helps you deal with all that comes with grief and what doesn't help at all. It's totally up to you.



ALL ABOUT CHANGES

When someone dies, your whole world can radically change. Some teens describe it as a hurricane or a tornado, taking out everything in its path. You're left to pick up the pieces and figure out what life will be like without that person. Who will you be? How will your family react? What will you remember and what will you miss? There are no expectations for how you might think and feel about the person or the loss (although people might be throwing lots of "shoulds" at you). Grief can be intense and loud or quiet and barely there. Some people aren't sure what they feel. It's all okay.

FEELINGS AND OTHER STRANGE THINGS

While no one can ever know exactly how you feel, there are some things grieving teens seem to have in common. Sometimes your sleep gets messed up — can't fall asleep, waking up early and having weird dreams. Food might not taste the same or your stomach could feel tied up in knots. Maybe your memory isn't working as well as it used to — "How did I forget my friend's birthday? Where is my phone?!" Maybe you find yourself frustrated with people talking about their day to day dramas.

A lot of teens notice they get really worried if someone is a few minutes late or doesn't answer a text right away. You might wonder if you're grieving the right way, or if you're grieving at all because you feel numb. You could come up against feelings of guilt, fear, anger, and sometimes shame. And then there is school...a lot of grieving teens say it's rough because it's harder to concentrate or finish homework.




FRIENDS
AKA: ANYONE OUT
THERE GET IT??

Lots of teens find it's hard to relate with friends and family in the same way when they're grieving. Friends, no matter how much they care, don't always know what to do and their attempts to make you feel better might not work very well. Honestly, when you're grieving sometimes nothing feels good or right — even things you loved before the death. It can be easy to take that frustration out on the people you're closest with — maybe you're a little quicker to get irritated these days? If so, you're not alone.

SPEAKING OF GUILT—AND REGRET

We'd venture a guess that 99.9% of people grieving feel guilt or regret about something they did and said or didn't do or say. We aren't expected to be perfect in our relationships because we are human and we all say and do things that looking back we wish we hadn't. When someone dies, this very natural experience can feel extra intense because we can't apologize to the person — in person. Many teens start by acknowledging these feelings, without rushing to push them aside. Sometimes just sitting with guilt and regret can lessen their intensity.

You can also try one of the suggestions in the 10 Things section of this tip sheet. If you're feeling guilty or worried that you had something to do with the person's death, it can be helpful to talk with a trusted adult who knows the situation and can answer questions. This might be a medical professional, family friend, caregiver, teacher, coach, pastor, or someone else who will be able to say more than "don't feel that way" and "you know that's not right." The regret you feel might inspire you to act differently in the future towards people you care about.



Joaquin's mom died in a car crash after she dropped him off at school. He was late that morning and didn't have time to say, "thanks mom, I love you," so now he tries to always tell close friends and family that he loves them when he says goodbye.

FAMILY: GOING THROUGH IT TOGETHER & SEPARATELY

Grief can change a lot of things in your world, including how you and your family connect. You might be really comfortable being open about your grief with family members. You might also find talking and showing emotions with them to be more intense than with friends or even strangers. How people grieve might look different depending on their age, where they grew up, cultural expectations (maybe your parents and Tias expect you to act a certain way, but it's not how you feel), religion/spirituality, gender norms (family members expecting you to cry or not cry depending on your gender), and what your family expects or needs from you in terms of helping with chores and caring for other people. You might see families in movies or on TV shows grieving very differently than yours, and start to wonder "Are we doing it wrong?"

Remembering that various cultures, generations, families, and even neighborhoods have different ideas about the "right" way to grieve, might help with feeling okay with your own grief experience. Sometimes expectations and individual ways of grieving can create tension or misunderstandings within families and communities. It can be helpful to talk with a friend or trusted adult to get clear on what you need and even ask for help with talking to your family about those needs.

CIRCLE THE THINGS PEOPLE SAY AND DO THAT GET UNDER YOUR SKIN:

Say "I'm sorry for your loss"

Come up and hug me when we aren't even friends

Say things like "This class is killing me" "I wish my mom would die"

Say "I know how you feel...my hamster/cat/great great great grandfather died."

Ask "Aren't you over it yet?"

Write in your own _____ (it's okay if your list is longer than ours)

WHAT IF I FORGET?

As you make your way into grief, you might find yourself worrying you'll forget certain things about the person who died. Consider asking family and friends to share their memories and stories about the person. *Warning: they might cry, it's okay!* Who could you ask to find out more? Who would know what your dad was like as a teenager or where your grandmother most wanted to go on a trip? We also know that not everyone was super close to their person who died. No matter what your relationship was like, or if you didn't really have one, you can still get hit with grief.

10 THINGS TO TRY WHEN THE GRIEF TIDE ROLLS IN

1. Remember to breathe. When we get tense we tend to hold our breath or have short, shallow breaths. First, notice that you are breathing and then try slowing it down, breathing more into your belly, and exhaling a little longer than you inhale.

2. Move your body. This doesn't have to be a sport (but it can be) — take a walk, do a push up, dance, or just jump up and down.

3. Call or text a friend. Pick ones who know how to show up and listen — or will at least send you a cute animal video.

4. Write it out. Forget spelling and grammar, there are no grades in grief.

5. Get messy — draw, paint, collage. Sometimes grief doesn't have words and art can be a great way to get out the feelings that don't always make sense. It's not art class, so don't worry about making it look a certain way.

6. Make room for whatever feelings are coming up. If you try to push them away, they will probably just push back harder. Feelings change and they won't last forever. Grief has no timeline, but it really does change over time.

7. Be kind — to yourself. You know that voice that sometimes gives you a really hard time? It might sound strange, but you can talk to that criticizing voice and ask it to tone it down. "Hey, I hear you, you're worried I'm doing this wrong, but really, I'm not. I'm doing the best I can right now, but thanks for your input."

8. Be a good friend — to yourself. Experiment with telling yourself you can do this, even if you don't know what you're doing! You might be feeling emotions you've never had before or doing things for the first time and all of it is happening without the

person who died. Take a moment to acknowledge how new and different this is and tell yourself, "Even if I'm overwhelmed right now, I will figure this out." And then...

9. Ask for help. We know, this one can be really hard and scary to do. Keep it simple and remember that people usually want to help, they are just waiting to be asked.

10. Take time to celebrate whatever is going well. When you're grieving it can be hard to make space for feeling good. You might feel guilty if you find yourself laughing or having a good time. Taking a break from grief doesn't mean you love or miss the person any less.

SOS (GETTING MORE HELP)

One last (but important) thing. Grief can be really hard — and it can make other things that were already hard seem impossible. Sometimes, grieving teens need more help. If you are struggling with school, eating, or sleeping, or if you're thinking about hurting yourself or others, talking to a real human person can be one of the best ways to get help. You can start with a friend, a family member, a trusted teacher or counselor, or a crisis line such as Youthline, a peer-to-peer crisis line for teens. You can call them at 877-968-8491, text them by sending teen2teen to 839863 between 4pm and 10pm, or chat online at OregonYouthLine.org. One more option: the Crisis Text Line can be reached by texting HELLO to 741741. Whether you connect with a crisis line or a person in your life, please do reach out to someone when you're struggling — you matter, and you deserve help and support!

