

As families are trying to adjust to the changes and restrictions put into place due to COVID-19, it may feel like the only thing on anyone's mind is how to cope with the effects of the National Health Crisis.

However, we recognize that there are many who are immensely grieving the death of someone they love while trying to navigate through these unfamiliar circumstances. In times of crisis, it is normal for us to worry about our own needs, but it is especially important that we take the time to remember those who are grieving right now.

1. Check in on them.

This could be a very lonely time for anyone but maybe even more so for someone who is grieving. Being told they can't see friends or family could serve as a reminder that there is someone in their life they couldn't see even if they wanted to. Text them, call them, facetime them—but don't take it personally if they don't answer or return the call. Keep showing up anyway. If you're not sure what to say, a simple, "Hey, you don't have to reply, but I just want you to know I'm thinking of you and I am here to listen if you want to talk" is enough.

2. Acknowledge their grief.

Recognize that the person who died may have been the person they would've relied on most for comfort during this time, and that navigating all of this without them is possibly making them feel even more isolated. Don't assume how they are feeling. Rather, simply ask them. Listen more and talk less. Sometimes the best thing we can do for someone who is grieving is offer our presence. The goal is to not take away their pain, but to give them a safe place to express it.

3. Accept their feelings and reactions without judgement.

Grief manifests differently for everybody. The added layers of emotions due to the pandemic can intensify the grief someone is already experiencing. Instead of making harsh judgements or holding onto unrealistic expectations, show them compassion and patience.

4. Share your memories of the person who died with them.

With everything going on, grieving families and kids may feel like their person who died is being forgotten. Say the name of the person who died and be ready to listen with an open heart and mind when/if they are ready to share memories of their person with you.

5. Help with practical matters.

Instead of saying "Let me know if there is anything I can do for you," offer to help with specific tasks. Right now, that may mean stopping at the grocery store for them, having a meal sent to their home, picking up their prescriptions, or sending craft supplies or a board game to their house to help keep the family engaged or provide a break for the adult(s).