GLOBAL GRIEF NETWORK | LEARNER TOOLS

Conversation Guide: Talking With Friends

Conversation Guide | Letting people know what helps



About this page: Friends often want to help but do not know how. Telling them clearly what helps, and what does not, can make support easier for everyone.

Why this can be hard

Some friends say the wrong thing, some go quiet, and some disappear for a while. Often this comes from worry about getting it wrong. A simple, specific request gives them a way back in.

Words you might use

"You do not have to say anything perfect. It helps just to know you are thinking of me."

"Please say her name. It means a lot when people remember her out loud."

"Could you come with me to the grocery store on Saturday? Small errands feel big right now."

"I might cancel plans sometimes. Please keep inviting me anyway."

"I do not want advice right now. I just need someone to listen."

If someone says something hurtful

You can let it pass, or gently say: "I know you mean well. What helps me more is _____." You do not owe anyone an explanation of your grief.

My list

Things that help me

Things that do not help right now

Friend	Something specific I could ask them for

Friend	Something specific I could ask them for

In immediate danger: call 911. 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: call or text **988** (US). Elsewhere, use your local emergency number and crisis line.

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