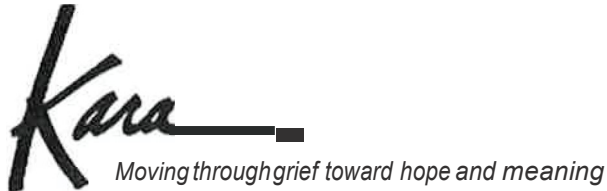


Ways to Support Children in Coping with Trauma or Loss

1. Take time to listen to their concerns; help them to feel safe; encourage expression of their feelings.
2. Acknowledge that trauma and loss are hard to handle for everybody.
3. Smile and hug often; use creative ways to help them express complex feelings.
4. Encourage them through their challenges with "I believe in you" messages.
5. Give age appropriate information about the critical event that is honest and direct.
6. Listen to their experience and respond without judgment.
7. Partner with children; help them decide how they want to deal with difficult "adult" things like funerals and remembrance anniversaries.
8. Let children know about YOUR difficult feelings and vulnerability.
9. Honor their uniqueness and individuality.
10. Affirm that all ways of experiencing grief are "normal".
11. Encourage them to take time for themselves and ask for what they need.
12. Let them know that you are available to talk or just to hang out, as they wish.



Comforting a Grieving Individual

Many people feel inadequate about what to say to a friend or family member who is grieving. This guide to comforting a grieving individual covers both 1) words that offer comfort, and 2) words that, while well intentioned, may harm or stifle the bereaved, making the journey through grief more difficult.

Saying nothing or pretending the death didn't happen also hurts the individual in the long run. It is important for this person to hear words of comfort from you and especially from friends, family members, or colleagues to whom he/she is close.

Words that Do Comfort	Words that May Not Comfort
I'm sorry.	Now she's in a better place.
I'm thinking of you.	Time will heal you.
I care and want to help.	Think of all you have to be thankful for.
You are so important to me.	Just be happy that he's out of his pain.
I'm here for you.	He lived a long life.
If I were in your shoes, I think I'd feel that way too.	Be strong. You are holding up so well.
One of my favorite memories of (use the name of the person or pet) is . . .	Keep busy.
It seems so natural to cry at a time like this.	Try not to think about it.
I don't know what to say but I know this must be very difficult for you.	He wouldn't have wanted you to be sad.
Do you feel like talking for a while?	This is a blessing.
How do you feel today?	Now you have an angel in heaven.
	You shouldn't feel that way.
	Stop acting like a baby.
	You need to be strong.