

## HELPING OTHERS WITH GRIEF



- Be Aware:** Grief is normal and necessary to find peace and a new kind of joy.
- Be There:** Learn to be with the person and listen without solving problems.
- Be Sensitive:** Allow them to feel the pain.
- Be Supportive:** Acknowledge their misery and do not try to take it away.
- Be Human:** Allow their expressions of feelings without judgment.
- Be Patient:** Adjusting one's life without a loved one is a lifelong journey.
- Be Helpful:** Locate a counselor or support group if desired by the survivor.
- Be Understanding:** There are no "right or wrong" feelings or reactions to death.
- Be Mindful:** They will never forget their loved one.
- Be Sympathetic:** Empathize that their life has changed forever.

### TEN ESSENTIAL QUALITIES FOR FRIENDS TO THE BEREAVED

1. Be warm and caring – it's okay to give a hug or cry with them.
2. Communicate a "desire to understand".
3. Be willing to be taught.
4. Do not try to "fix things".
5. Be willing to be involved in pain and suffering.
6. Maintain a non-judgmental acceptance of feelings and behaviors.
7. Allow for and encourage open mourning.
8. Support naturalness of response.
9. Primarily communicate non-verbally (smile, tone, touch).
10. Be patient and maintain the capacity to hear and respond to needs.

--Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D.