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Empowered Living #50 – Grieving a loss

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As the leaves change colour and begin to fall from the trees, I'm reminded of the impermanence of life. People and relationships come into our lives...and they eventually go. It's a natural cycle that happens regularly...and still, we tend to resist it.

North American culture is so reticent to talk about death and endings...and yet, as my 13-year-old daughter reminded me recently, "death is a part of life." As some of you know, my father died two weeks ago – it's the third grandparent my kids have lost in 6 years. They've also been through their parents' divorce and watched both of us go through break-ups.

So we've had many opportunities to talk about losing someone we care about, and how to cope with feelings of sadness and grief. And we've learned that, while none of us likes losing someone we love, when we allow ourselves to grieve and consciously focus on healing, we eventually do feel better.

So if you or someone you know has experienced the loss of a friend, family member, pet, or partner and is struggling with feelings of sadness, this issue is for you.

Upcoming events

- **October 5** – [Empaths and narcissists: Why loving women attract toxic partners](#) (online)
- **October 6** – [Single Gals anniversary dinner](#) (Ottawa)
- **October 28** – [Lemons to lemonade: How to turn your heartbreak into a breakthrough](#) (online)
- **November 13** – [Heartbreak to breakthrough](#) (1-day virtual event)

Resources



Learn about the 5 things that help when grieving:

[When you lose someone you love](#)



Discover the 3 stages of letting go of people we love in:

[The art of letting go](#)



Discover some typical coping strategies to deal with pain in:

[What to do \(and not to do\) when a relationship ends](#)



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Dating and relationship tips: What to say (and not to say) when someone is grieving

Most often, when we see someone who's grieving, our instinct is to want to make them feel better. In part, that's because we genuinely don't want to see others suffer. But it's also because we are uncomfortable around other people's pain and don't know what to say or do.

So we either say or do nothing (which leaves the person feeling uncared for), or we offer some trite platitude or words of wisdom, which really don't help at all (and sometimes make things worse).

When someone has lost a loved one, they generally don't want to hear things like:

- They're in a better place now.
- God only gives you what you can handle.
- You'll find someone else.
- You should...

What they want is understanding and the opportunity to grieve. Some things you can do and say:

- Acknowledge their loss and tell them you're sorry.
- Let them know that you're thinking of them and sending them love.
- Write a thoughtful message or send a card.
- Sit with them and hold space for them to share their feelings.
- Encourage them to talk about their loved one (most people love sharing memories).
- Share your favourite memories of their loved one (if you knew them).
- Check in periodically and ask if they're ok. Ask how you can help.
- Offer specific ways to help (bringing food, buying groceries, running errands, caring for kids).
- Invite them to meals, especially during holidays and anniversaries.
- Spend time doing an activity with them.
- Keep offering to help and support, even if initially they turn you down.

In the end, doing or saying something is better than doing or saying nothing. If you simply ask, the grieving person will usually tell you what is most helpful to them, making it easier to be truly supportive.

Healthy hints



[Breast cancer awareness month](#)

Rockin' recipes



[Fall comfort food](#)

Creativity corner



[Halloween crafts](#)

Comedy central



[First date fails](#)

Wishing you healing and joy this Thanksgiving!

xo Karen

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