

Pay Attention to Yourself

Take a few moments to pay attention to what you are feeling and what you need. Feelings are demanding; if we let them out, they are acknowledged and often go away. If we ignore our feelings, they don't go anywhere; in fact, they often get worse or are expressed as physical pain or illness. Take as good care of yourself as you take care of others.

Ask for help rather than feeling you have to do everything yourself. Don't expect others to read your mind. Tell them specific ways they can help. Recognize that by allowing others to help you, you are giving them a gift. People who care for you want to help; let them.

- ❖ Tell those close to you what helps and what doesn't. If you want to talk about your loved one and hear stories about him/her, then let your friends and family know that so they don't avoid those stories in a misguided effort to spare you the pain.
- ❖ Start a memory book in your loved one's honor and have friends and family write their memories in the book—each memory is a gift to you, a story you may never have heard before.
- ❖ Give a gift or donate time in memory of your loved one.
- ❖ Try to keep to a routine; eat well, keep a regular sleep schedule, get some moderate exercise, take some time each day to just sit and relax. Take medication as prescribed and use alcohol only in moderation.
- ❖ If shopping is hard for you, consider shopping on line or by catalog so you don't have to go into stores.
- ❖ Don't feel guilty if you have fun. Your goal is to keep a balance between grieving and going on with your life.

- ❖ Find a way to remember your loved one that feels right for you and your family. Light a candle or serve your loved one's favorite dish. Copy a photo or engrave an ornament with a favorite saying. Set time aside to give a toast and share memories. Visit and decorate the grave if this would offer you comfort.

Give yourself permission to feel pleasure.

Honor your loved one's memory by
Allowing joy; they would want you to be happy;
It does not diminish your connection to them.

