



Honoring Loss

Seniors are faced with varying types of loss as they age. Beyond losing friends and family members to death or disease, aging adults sometimes find themselves losing varying stages of independence. It can be difficult walking with your senior loved one through these valleys of loss, but while the immediate reaction may be to hurry them through the process, it is almost always better to allow that grief to happen. Here are a few ways that you may be able to honor the losses that your senior loved one is experiencing.



Light a Candle

For family members or friends who pass away, consider having a candle in the home to light in remembrance of those dear to your loved one who have died. If your loved one seems to be feeling extra sad one day – and grief certainly does come in unpredictable waves – ask if she would like to light a candle and take a moment to tell a story or share something about those she is thinking about.

Visit the Cemetery

So often, a visit to the cemetery is overlooked as a way to honor loss. It can be unpleasant or uncomfortable to head to the cemetery, but it can be a very healing trip for your loved one. Especially for seniors that can no longer drive on their own, having someone ask if they would like to go visit a special grave can be a wonderful gift of acknowledging that loss.

Sit and Listen

It is difficult when your loved one is hurting in some way because of a loss. It is so difficult, in fact, that many times well-meaning children or friends will often want to talk about anything *but* the loss with an aging adult. Instead of ignoring the loss or the feelings of sadness, sit with your loved one in the midst of it, doing nothing but listening. There is nothing that you can do to fix their loss, but sitting and listening can speak volumes to seniors in terms of support and encouragement.

Advocate or Volunteer

If your loved one seems interested, coordinate a way to volunteer or advocate for a cause

together. This could be a walk in honor of a loved one with Alzheimer's Disease or serving coffee at a Cancer Survivor Support Group. Love in action is sometimes the best way to cope with loss in a healthy way.

Watch for Signs of Depression

Losing people and independence can be very sad and traumatic. However, [depression is not a normal part of aging](#), even with all of the loss that can be experienced. If you are concerned about serious signs of depression in your loved one, such as sleep disturbances, diet changes, or statements of self-harm, reach out to medical professionals for assistance.

[Our Visiting Angels](#) are experienced in validating the feelings of our senior clients, and serving them through listening and relationship. If you are curious if a companion may help your loved one, give us a call to set up a consultation. Want more information about depression, loss, and seniors? [Check out our Family Resource center](#), an online library of articles to make you a better aging advocate for your loved one.

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