

WHAT TO DO?

What could you possibly do to help someone you love at the most difficult time in their life? Research has shown that there ARE things you can do to be helpful and offer support.

- **Express Concern**

Letting your friend or loved one know you are thinking about them and are concerned for their well-being is extremely helpful. There is a fine line, however, between expressing enough concern and expressing excessive worry or pessimism. Saying something simple like “This must be so hard for you” or “What can I do to help you?” shows your concern and your support.

- **Be Physically Present**

Being physically present means to simply be there, in person. You don't necessarily have to fill the time with your loved one talking or performing daily tasks for him/her. Just knowing that you are present can help them feel loved and accepted, just as they are.

- **Reach Calm Acceptance**

One of the **least helpful things you can do** for your loved one is to continue down the path of denial when he has already accepted his current physical state or impending death. You might be tempted to say things like “Don't give up!” or “You're not going to let this thing beat you, are you?” **While well-meaning, these types of sayings don't show your loved one acceptance.**

By calmly meeting your loved one wherever he is at in his level of acceptance, you give him permission to feel how he wants to feel and let him know you love and support him just as he is.

- **Offer Practical Assistance**

You probably want to do something tangible that is helping your loved one in an obvious way - something that yields results. You can do that by helping him/her with practical things. Do the laundry, clean the house, run errands, take them to doctor's appointments. They will appreciate the help and know you care enough to take time out of your own busy schedule to support them.