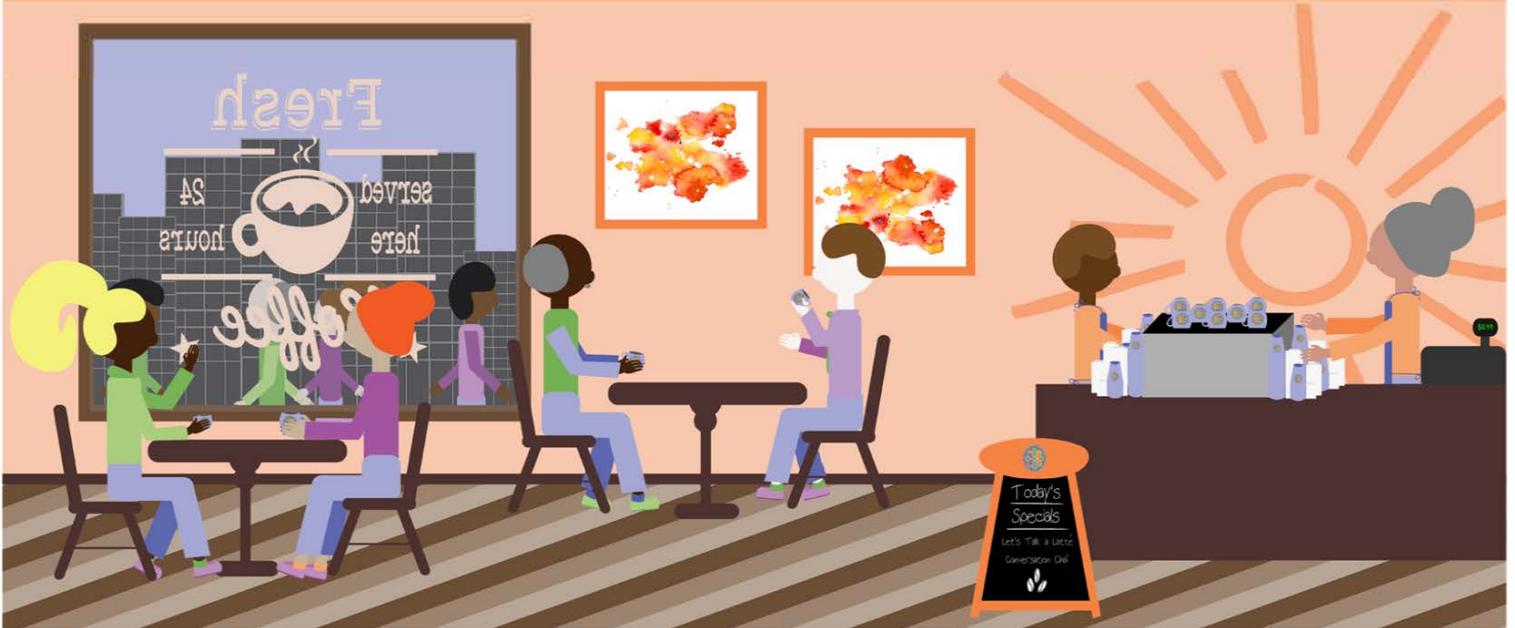


Connecting with a Suicide Loss Survivor: What You Can Do to Help



Listen



- **Be ready, open, and willing to have tough conversations**
 - + Know that it may take time - keep checking in
- **Offer your full attention**
 - + Focus on listening by asking open-ended questions
- **Understand the loss survivor's choices and emotions from their point of view rather than your own**



Validate



- **Resist the desire to fix, reframe, or advise**
 - + Try paraphrasing what you have heard in your own words
- **There is no timeline on grief**
 - + Avoid the pull to say that "things will get better"
- **Everyone experiences suicide loss differently - what is helpful to you, may not be the same for someone else**



Support



- **Ask what the loss survivor needs help with and assist with tangible, supportive tasks**
 - + Bring prepared meals
 - + Grocery shop for them
 - + Walk their dogs
- **Relieve some pressure by helping the loss survivor navigate the support resources available to them**
 - + Provide suicide loss resources
 - + Help schedule appointments
- **Keep checking in months and years after the loss**
 - + Holidays
 - + Life events (e.g., wedding, new baby, promotion)
 - + Birthday of the person who died
 - + Loss anniversaries



Honor



- **Show the loss survivor that you remember the person who died**
 - + Reach out
 - + Share memories
 - + Proactively remember important dates
- **Suggest ways to honor the memory of the person who died**
 - + Regularly meet at their favorite place
 - + Create a memorial in their honor
 - + Participate in a memorial walk
- **Remind the loss survivor you continue to value the life of the person who has died and that they will never be forgotten**

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<https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/postvention>

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