



THINGS THAT PUSH MY GRIEF BUTTONS

Sometimes people say or do things that push my grief buttons.

What do people say that bugs you?

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What do people do that bugs you?

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If you know someone who is grieving in the future what would you say or do instead?

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Sometimes people say or do things that push my grief buttons.

SUPPORTING TEENS THROUGH GRIEF

When a teen is grieving after someone important to them has died, their emotions can feel overwhelming and unpredictable. The purpose of the *Things That Push My Grief Buttons* activity is to help teens identify things people do and say that might affect their feelings and behaviours and to explore ways they would like to be supported in their grief. This activity can be completed independently or together with a trusted adult, providing an opportunity to discuss the teen's insights and preferences. Adults can also use this as a starting point to help the young person communicate with others about what support works best for them in their grief.

WHAT TEENS MAY FIND HELPFUL

- **Listening Without Judgement:** Let them express their emotions freely, whether they're angry, sad, or even numb. Avoid trying to "fix" their grief or minimise their feelings.
- **Acknowledging the Death:** Speak openly about their Important Person who died. Mention their name and acknowledge the teen's grief.
- **Creating a Safe Space:** Assure them that their feelings, no matter how intense, are normal and okay to share.
- **Modelling Healthy Emotional Expression:** Show teens how to express emotions in constructive ways and maintain a balance between different feelings. Let them see that it's okay to experience both sadness and moments of happiness.
- **Being Patient:** Grief can take time. Some teens may not want to talk immediately but appreciate knowing you're available when they're ready.
- **Providing Structure:** Grieving can feel chaotic. Gentle routines, predictability and supportive boundaries can help teens feel grounded.

WHAT TEENS MAY FIND UNHELPFUL

- **Avoiding the Topic:** Pretending the death didn't happen or changing the subject can make teens feel isolated in their grief.
- **Pushing for Positivity:** Statements like "they wouldn't want you to be sad" can feel dismissive of their emotions.
- **Overloading with Advice:** Offering too many solutions or comparing their grief to your own experiences can overwhelm them.
- **Judging Their Reactions:** Criticising how they cope, whether it's crying, withdrawing, or being irritable, can make them feel misunderstood.

This activity offers teens a way to understand their grief triggers and communicate their needs. Your role as a supportive adult is to provide the space and understanding they need to process their emotions at their own pace.