



Have you heard...

...SILENCE...

WONDERSPACE
BLUE

IT COULD BE UNHELPFUL BECAUSE:

Sometimes after someone dies, the people in your life may say nothing. This could look like avoiding any interaction, or like continuing with more typical conversation, rather than talking or asking about your grief process or the person who died. Sometimes it might look like staying away from mentioning that person or sharing stories that involve them, especially with people who also knew the person who died. Others may be unsure what to say, or want to avoid saying the wrong thing. They might also be fearful of making you feel worse by bringing up the loss or emotions around it. However, this can make you feel forgotten or unseen, as if your loss is not recognized or viewed as important enough to talk about. Silence can seem like unspoken pressure to be “okay”, or to avoid talking about your person, especially if significant time has passed since your person died, or the circumstances around their death were difficult. It can also leave you wondering if others remember your person or care about their life and death the way you do.





After someone dies you are likely to think about that person and relationship often, whether anyone else mentions them or not. Silence from others does not always mean that they don't notice or care about your loss, but it may mean that they don't know what to do or how to help. It's okay to talk about your loss and your response to it, even if other people are not bringing it up; initiating the conversation can encourage people you care about to talk about your person as well. You might feel hurt that others have not engaged with you around your grief, and it's okay to share that with people you are close to. If you know what would be more helpful, such as hearing your person's name or stories about them, or asking about how you are doing, let others know that too. If it feels like others have forgotten, it may be helpful to spend time with people who knew your person well, to do things your person enjoyed while talking about them, or to give a gift or make something in their memory. You might also benefit from joining a support group or finding another space where grief is discussed and expressed more openly.

You could say:

- **"Sometimes people don't know what to say when someone dies, so they say nothing."** It can be hard when other people act normal or talk as if nothing happened. How does it feel for you when people in your life don't mention your person? Have there been times when this was especially hard, or when you were glad no one said anything?
- **"It's okay to ask for what you need."** Sometimes after someone dies, other people don't know what would be helpful for you. Has anyone done or said anything that was comforting, or made you feel less alone? Do you have any ideas of things that other people could do to help, or how we could ask them to help? Some things that have helped for me are...
- **"We can talk to people, go to places or do things that help us remember our person."** Sometimes when we miss someone, it can help to hear or see their name, or to do things or see people who were connected with them. It can also help to talk to other people or go to places made especially for people who are grieving.