

WHY YOU SHOULD SAY THEIR LOVED ONE'S NAME

Compassionate guidance for family, friends, and caregivers

Many people avoid saying the name of someone who died because they worry it will cause pain. Yet the grieving person is already thinking about and missing their loved one. Hearing the name can be a comforting acknowledgment that the person lived, mattered, and is still remembered. It can also open the door for memories, stories, and continuing connection.

WHY THE NAME MATTERS

A name carries identity, relationship, and memory. Saying it confirms that the person has not been forgotten.

- It recognizes the loved one as a real and valued person
- It reassures the bereaved that others remember
- It makes room for stories and shared memories
- It honors the continuing bond of love

WAYS TO SAY THEIR NAME

The name can be included naturally and gently without forcing a long conversation.

- “I was thinking about [Name] today.”
- “I remember how [Name] always...”
- “What do you miss most about [Name]?”
- “I would love to hear a story about [Name].”

IF EMOTIONS ARISE

Tears do not mean that you caused the grief. They often mean the person feels safe enough to express it.

- Remain calm and allow the emotion
- Do not apologize for mentioning the loved one
- Offer a tissue, quiet presence, or gentle touch if welcome
- Say, “Take your time. I am here.”

FOLLOW THEIR LEAD

Some people want to talk often, while others may not be ready. Respect both responses without avoiding the name forever.

- Notice whether they welcome the conversation
- Respect a change of subject or request for privacy
- Use the words and relationship terms they prefer
- Try again gently at another appropriate time

A GENTLE REMINDER

Saying their loved one's name does not create the grief. It acknowledges the love, the life, and the person who continues to matter.

You do not need perfect words. Your steady, compassionate presence matters.

