

GROUND RULES

Being part of a group is very therapeutic and rewarding work. What you get from being here is directly related to what you put into it. By being here and actively participating in this safe environment, you'll significantly enhance your personal growth after losing your loved one.



**Holding up 4 fingers is our sign
for a hug, a kind word, a
gentle touch on the arm.**

Like many others, you will soon begin to develop a strong commitment to our group process. As you become more comfortable here, you will find the following guidelines are an essential part of that process, serving to make this experience both useful and safe.

ADVICE

We are not here to offer advice. We are here to share experiences and feelings. If you have had similar feelings or experiences, let someone know what worked for you.

Refrain from saying, "You know, if I were you I would . . ."

CRYING

Crying is both natural and healthy. Kleenex was invented for a reason.

In this group, give yourself permission to cry without embarrassment. Here, it is okay for big folks to cry.

RESCUING

When you are visibly into feelings, a RESCUER tries to help you stop crying and to feel better through unsolicited hugs and touching.

A well-intentioned rescuer may relieve their own feelings, but you'll have been cheated out of a rare opportunity to fully experience and externalize your own. We can be far more caring by being attentive listeners.

COMFORT

As you talk through your pain, you may not want comfort forced upon you. However, it's appropriate at any time for you to seek comfort.

TOLERANCE

We often find the experiences, feelings and expressions of others to be completely foreign to our own. Here, we lovingly accept what is expressed as fully legitimate for the person expressing it. We are not here to judge each other, but to listen and offer understanding.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The only way we can feel safe and completely comfortable sharing with you is to be certain that all that is said here stays here. That means we **don't** discuss what happens in this room to anyone outside this room for any reason—even without mentioning names. Really, we don't.