THE STUDENT WHO IS GRIEVING

During the course of their college careers, many students are likely to experience the loss of someone close to them. Sometimes students are dealing with their own life threatening illnesses.

**WHAT TO DO:**

* Listen carefully and compassionately.
* Consider the option of allowing the student to postpone turning in assignments or taking exams.
* When appropriate, if you are comfortable, you can share similar experiences you have had so the student doesn't feel alone or crazy.
* Be on the alert for signs that the student is feeling a need to harm himself/herself as a way to cope with the pain.
* Talk to the student about getting some professional help to deal with the loss.
* Refer to an Advocacy Counselor.

**WHAT NOT TO DO:**

* Don’t be afraid of tears. Tears are a natural, healthy way of releasing emotions.
* Don’t avoid discussing the deceased person with the student. He/she is often grateful to find someone who will listen.
* Don’t say well-intentioned things to the student that might imply the grief is not valid…”It can’t be that bad.”

\*\**When in doubt, if any personal information the student tells you raises red flags, consult with* the Student Advocacy and Accountability team. <https://webapps.mccneb.edu/bcat/>