

THE GRIEF *circle*

Some families have found the concept of the "grief circle" helpful when thinking about comfort for themselves and others. It is based on the "ring theory" developed by psychologist Susan Silk. Sometimes it can be overwhelming to comfort other people who were not as intimately close with your child as you are. People usually have good intentions, but find it hard to know who to turn to when they're in need of comfort. At this time, parents and siblings should only be on the receiving end of comfort, not the giving end.

Any person other than the parent and/or sibling should be providing "comfort in" and allowing for the "dump out" of grief.

Think of it like concentric circles. The outer circle provides comfort inward, and the inner circle expresses grief outward. Parents and siblings share their grief with anyone in the circle. Grandparents receive the grief of the parent and find comfort with their close friend. The church community finds comfort with each other and provides comfort to all family and close friends. This can be applied to any grieving person.

Your child affected many people's lives. Their life has a lasting impact, leaving many people to grieve. It is important to remember that everyone else can seek comfort from their own support during this time. You do not have to shoulder everyone else's pain while you are intensely experiencing your own.

