



The Importance of Showing Up During the Hard Times

It's easy to show up during good times, like the fun family and friends events with vigorous kickball games played by a healthy group, laughter, good food, little cousins running through sprinklers, baseball, and apple pie, and everything else. It's easy to show up for that.

But life hands us so much more than joyful times—it's also filled with its share of challenges.

What about when mom or dad or someone else close to you becomes ill and needs extra help? What happens when a sibling loses a job, or their marriage or other relationship falls apart? What about when someone dies, and grief takes hold?

Suddenly, the days become difficult, and laughter seems to be in the rearview mirror. When these times happen, it's easy and tempting to stay away and leave well-enough alone.

But the hard times are when we need to show up the most often and be the most available for those we love. Those are the times when our physical presence is necessary, and if we can't be present physically, our emotional presence is significant. Hard times are labeled that for a reason. They are incredibly challenging.

It's so much easier to think of aging parents the way they used to be—healthy and able. It's so much easier to think of crumbling marriages as the way they are supposed to be. It's so much easier to think of grief and loss as someone else's journey instead of our own with someone we dearly love. Hard times are hard. And most, if not all of us, would choose to stay away from hard things.

Life doesn't work that way. When we have people in our lives who are important to us, hard times will come and go. And in those times, love demands that we show up and be present—physically, emotionally, spiritually—however we can. Others may not request that of us because they don't want to be a burden, but we should demand it of ourselves. Not showing up for others can cause heartache and regret, which can lead to distance and resentment, and even more despair.

What does showing up look like?

- Help your loved one with household tasks that are difficult for them to complete (e.g., housekeeping, lawn mowing, etc.).
- Communicate regularly with your loved one—plan to check-in at the same time of the day, or send timely cards, letters or emails
- Explore and set-up community services, like Meals on Wheels or hospice care (if appropriate), to support your loved one.
- Visit your loved one as often as you can—whether in-person, virtually or over the phone.
- It might work for you to live closer to the individual who needs extra support.

(continued on reverse)



All these things and countless others are ways you can show up. Not everyone is capable or able to care for physical needs. That's OK. Show up by finding something you can do that will ease the burden of the person. You don't have to be perfect to show you are present and care for the special person in your life.



Hospice of the Red River Valley has many resources available for the public, on a loan basis, through the resource libraries in each of our offices. Topics include caregiving, terminal illness, dying, death, grief and loss. For more information about grief and loss, visit our website: www.hrrv.org or call us at (800) 237-4629