



formerly HospiceCare of Boulder & Broomfield Counties

COMMUNITYCARE

Hospice | Supportive Services

IDENTIFYING AND ENHANCING YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

Research suggests that those who have someone they can go to for help with practical tasks, someone who will listen without judgment, or someone who will help them take a brief respite are more likely to be better adjusted in their bereavement (Vanderwerker & Pigerson, 2004). Few can serve in all of these roles. Many can serve in at least one or more. The RoLoDeX can help you identify those in your life who you can call on for specific types of support.

RoLoDeX Characteristics

Respite figures: These are the friends you can rely on to participate with you in enjoyable activities (e.g., going to dinner, a movie, a walk, etc.).

Listener: Those who can listen without trying to fix anything or tell you their story are the ones who can hold a space that allows you to say and feel whatever is needed. These are the ones who can listen with little interruption, judgment, or interpretation.

Doer: These are the ones you can trust to get things done (e.g., Organizing, yardwork, cooking, cleaning, bills, and other practical tasks).

X off your list or limit access *for now* (Setting boundaries): These can be the folks who require more energy to be with than what you have available at this time. This is your time to heal. There is nothing wrong with creating clear limits around time and activities. You can think of clear boundaries as “helping them help you.”

The following exercise can help you identify those who can support you in one or more of the roles of the RoLoDeX. It may be important to identify as many people and their various roles as you can in order to prevent the burn-out of any one person.

On the backside of this page, make a list of all friends, family members, and acquaintances that may or may not be of support to you as you heal. Be sure to include those who have offered to help but you don't know how they might help at this time. That can be determined at another time. Expand your reach to those in the workplace, other groups with whom you are connected, and even paid professionals when appropriate.

Once you have your list, write the letter(s) R, L, D, and/or X next to each name as they correspond to the roles each person might serve in support of you. Some names may fall into multiple categories. For example, Jean might be a good listener and a hiking buddy. Therefore, you will write L (Listener) and R (Respite). On the other hand, Jim is great fun and an excellent plumber but not comfortable with heavy emotions (R, D).

Examples:

Jean _____ L, R

Jim _____ R, D

When finished, identify your top few for each category. You might try scheduling at least one R, L, and D interaction each week.

Adapted from:

Doka, K. J., & Neimeyer, R. A. (2012). Orchestrating Social Support. In R. A. Neimeyer (Ed.), *Techniques of Grief Therapy* (pp. 315-317). New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

Vanderwerker, L. C., & Pigerson, H. G. (2004). Social support and technological connectedness as protective factors in bereavement. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 9, 45-57.