

## What to Say to Someone Who is Grieving?

### The Best Things to Say to Someone in Grief

- “I am so sorry for your loss.”
- “I wish I had the right words; just know I care.”
- “I don’t know how you feel, but I am here to help in any way I can.”
- “You and your loved one will be in my thoughts and prayers.”
- “My favorite memory of your loved one is....”
- “I am always just a phone call away.”
- “Give a hug instead of saying something.”
- “We all need help at times like this, I am here for you.”
- “I am usually up early or late, if you need anything, or for me to just be with you.”
- “Just be with the person and be comfortable with silence.”

### The Worst Things to Say to Someone in Grief

- “At least they lived a long life, many people die young.”
- “S/he is in a better place.”
- “S/he brought this on him/herself.”
- “There is a reason for everything.”
- “Aren’t you over them yet? They have been dead for a while now.”
- “You can have another child still.”
- “S/he was such a good person, God wanted him/her to be with Him.”
- “I know how you feel.”
- “S/he did what she came here to do, and it was her time to go.”
- “Be strong.”

### When Trying to Help...

When in the position of wanting to help a friend or loved one in grief, often times our first desire is to try to “fix” the situation, when in all actuality our good intentions can lead to nothing but more grief. Knowing the right thing to say is only half of the responsibility of being a supportive emotional caregiver. We have comprised two lists which examine both the HELPFUL and the NOT SO HELPFUL traits of people just trying to help.

#### The Most Helpful Traits

- Supportive, but not trying to fix it
- Recognizing validity of feelings
- Non active, not telling anyone what to do
- Acknowledging nothing can make it better
- Recognizing the loss
- Understanding grief is not time limited

#### The Not-So-Helpful Traits

- Want to fix the loss
- Uncomfortable with grief feelings
- Directive in nature
- Rationalize or try to explain loss
- May be judgmental
- May minimize the loss
- Putting a timeline on loss