10 Best Things to Say to a Grieving Person

The following suggestions offer kindness and compassion.

1. **"I'm so sorry for your loss."** It's short, sweet, heartfelt, and always welcomed.

2. **"Please know that I'm here for you."** It never hurts to remind someone in pain of your friendship, no matter how close you are.

3. **"You're in my thoughts and prayers."** Even people who aren’t religious are unlikely to be offended if they know you’re sincere (or leave off the "prayers" if you think they might be).

4. **"Remember you can call me at any hour."** Alternately, be specific: "You know I’m always up till midnight." Or, "It’s never too early in the morning to call."

5. **"She was such a wonderful person."** Don’t worry that you’ll make the bereaved person think about the loved one by bringing up positive reminiscences; you can rest assured he or she is always in mind already.

6. **"I don't know what to say."** Admitting you’re tongue-tied about offering condolences is better than falling back on a platitude.

7. **"I can't imagine what you're going through."** Candor when you give condolence beats comparing the death with your own stories of loss.

8. **"Would you like to talk about it? I'm listening."** Provide a gentle opening for the person to share turbulent emotions, if desired.

9. **"How are you feeling -- really?"** A more pointed invitation to unload may be welcomed by some; just don’t press.

10. **"I've brought you a meal to eat or freeze; it's in disposable containers so you don't so you don't have to return anything."** Better than asking, "How can I help?" is to step in with concrete help: bringing a meal or showing up to mow the lawn.

By Paula Spencer Scott, Caring.com contributing editor

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