

10 Supportive Things to Say to Someone Who Is Grieving

Simple words that communicate presence without trying to fix the loss

A COMPLIMENTARY GUIDE FOR GRIEVING INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS

Compassionate guidance for caregiving, grief, and end-of-life transitions.

From Diagnosis to Goodbye™

Presence Before Perfect Words

Grief often leaves friends and family unsure of what to say. The goal is not to remove the person's pain or find a perfect explanation. The goal is to communicate: I see you, I remember, and I am willing to stay present.

Supportive words make room for grief. They do not rush, compare, correct, or explain it away.

1. “I am so sorry for your loss.”

Simple and sincere is enough. You do not need to add an explanation.

2. “I am here with you.”

This communicates companionship without pressuring the person to talk.

3. “You do not have to go through this alone.”

Offer continued presence, especially after the funeral and early attention have passed.

4. “Would you like to tell me about them?”

Using the deceased person's name and inviting memories can affirm that their life still matters.

5. “There is no right way to grieve.”

This reduces pressure to appear strong, recover quickly, or follow someone else's timeline.

More Words That Help

1. “What feels hardest today?”

Focusing on today makes the question more manageable than asking a broad “How are you?”

2. “I can listen without trying to fix it.”

This gives permission for honest feelings and lets the person set the direction.

3. “May I help with something specific?”

Offer a concrete choice: bring a meal, make a call, provide transportation, sit quietly, or help with an errand.

4. “It makes sense that you miss them.”

Validation honors the relationship and avoids treating grief as a problem to solve.

5. “I will keep checking in.”

Grief continues after public rituals end. Follow through with a call, message, visit, or remembrance on a meaningful date.

Phrases to Use With Care

Avoid statements that minimize or interpret the loss, such as “Everything happens for a reason,” “At least...,” “You need to be strong,” or “I know exactly how you feel.” Even well-intended religious explanations can feel painful when offered before listening. If faith is important to the person, ask what kind of spiritual support would be comforting.

A Better Follow-Through Plan

- ☐ Use the person's loved one's name
- ☐ Listen more than you speak
- ☐ Remember a birthday, anniversary, or holiday
- ☐ Offer one specific act of help
- ☐ Check in again after several weeks
- ☐ Respect silence and different expressions of grief

You do not have to carry this journey alone. Support is available, and asking for help is an act of care.

About Begin Again Living Ministries

Begin Again Living Ministries offers compassionate education and support for individuals, families, caregivers, churches, and organizations navigating grief, caregiving, stress, and end-of-life transitions.

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