**What Not to Say to a Griever**

1. **I am sorry.**

This is the natural response when someone does not know what else to say. Here are some things to say in the place of “sorry”….. I wish I could take your pain away, What would be helpful for you right now or Can I check on you on a regular basis.

Most people are very uncomfortable with the process of grief and have no idea what to say to a griever. I am sorry is usually the natural response.

1. **Don’t Bring Up Finances**

Do not bring up money or anything related to finances during the immediate time after death, especially at a funeral or similar gathering. If the client brings it up, deflect it and say that we can talk about it at a more appropriate time.

Let the client know that you will be there with them every step of the way and follow up on that promise.

Bringing up finances at a funeral or related services is both insincere and problematic. It shows the griever that you are generally not considerate of their life event and only concerned with superficial things

1. **I know how you feel**

Even if you have gone through the exact same set of events as the griever, you really have no idea what they are feeling. No two grievers have the same experience. You may empathize with the griever and have a really good understanding of what they are going through.

A griever’s emotions depend on several factors including: personality, support system, finances, faith, traditions, relationship to the deceased, grieving style, culture, how the deceased died and many more. When someone told me they knew how I felt, I felt like it was a slap in the face. I honestly wanted to take my frustrations out on that individual.

1. **Look at the bright side…….**

This is also said in a different way…. At least he/she is no longer suffering or we should be grateful for…

Although this is said in an attempt to shift the griever’s mind to the positive side of the deceased no longer suffering. There is no positive side of someone dying. I would rather have my family here one more second rather than the thought of never speaking, seeing or hearing them again.

1. **Put this Chapter of Your Life to Bed and Focus on the Next Phase**

This is also said in a different way….Put this behind you and move on.

There is no moving on from death. You simply learn how to live life differently. The suggested thought of putting it behind you and simply moving on is insulting to the griever. The process of grief is a long tenuous path with no two experiences being the same.

1. **This is how you should feel**

This is common among folks ignorant of the grieving process. No two grievers travel the same path. I reiterate that a griever’s experience is dependent on: personality, support system, finances, faith, traditions, relationship to the deceased, grieving style, culture, how the deceased died and many more.

There is no time table on when or if you should feel a certain way.

Everyone has a unique experience.

1. **How do you feel?**

Most grievers are not going to be able nor comfortable putting emotions into words. They are also not going to be comfortable telling an acquaintance their emotions.

This is a very complicated question that stirs up a lot of emotions. Most grievers will simply say they are fine in an effort to avoid going into detail and evoking an emotional moment.

1. **Call me or reach out to me when you get a moment or when you feel up to it**

This is an easy way out for a person who has never experienced grief as they often know that the griever is not going to act on it. This is a meaningless act

A griever is almost never going to reach out to display their emotions. The process is very painful and absorbs most of their energy. They also do not want to be a burden on anyone else. The griever also knows that the offer is made only to be nice.

1. **With Time Everything will be fine**

Life is never fine and time does not heal wounds. You simply learn how to live life differently. This statement is also said out of ignorance from someone who has really never experienced or dealt with grief.

The loved one is never forgotten. In many instances, the loved one is often thought of more often because they are missed dearly.

1. **Take comfort knowing that (put in the deceased name) is in a better place**

There is no comfort here as the best place for my loved on is with me or spending time with me creating memories.

This is also said out of ignorance from someone who has really never experienced grief.