

• WHAT DO YOU SAY TO SOMEONE GRIEVING?

- The thoughts we express in consolation may cause greater pain or they may bring healing comfort. These suggestions are offered for consideration. One thing very important to survivors of a death loss is for friends to **USE THE PERSON'S NAME!** In doing so, you are not recalling painful memories. The bereaved ones can never forget. Please, refer to the lost loved one by name.

Some positive and comforting things to say...

- "I'm sorry."
- "How are you doing with all this?"
- "This must be hard for you."
- "I can't/don't know how you feel, but I care."
 - "I've been thinking about you." (And, if appropriate) "I've been praying for you."
 - "Do you feel like talking? I'll listen."
- "Would you like for me to come over and just be with you for awhile?"
- "May I stop by and take you for a ride?" "...to church?" "...to help with an errand?"
- "Would it be all right for me to call once in awhile to be sure you're all right? I don't want you to feel so alone."
- "Take **all** the time you need."
- "This must seem like more than you can handle."
- "Don't feel you must be strong for my sake."
 - "It's okay to cry."
 - "Some things don't make any sense."
 - "I just don't know what to say."
- "I'll check with you tomorrow to see how I can help."

Some positive and comforting things to do...

- Let your genuine concern and caring show.
- Say you are sorry about what happened to their loved one and about their pain.
- Allow them to express as much grief as they feel and are willing to share at the moment.
- Be available to listen, to run errands, help with children, take kids out or whatever else seems needed at the time.
- Allow them to talk about their lost loved one as often as they want to do it.

WHAT NOT TO SAY TO SOMEONE GRIEVING

Sometimes, even with the best of intentions, we say things to people who are suffering a loss which actually negate their pain and/or their need to express it. Here are some examples of things you should avoid saying.

Negative and painful things that are sometimes said in ignorance...

- "I know just how you feel."
- "It was God's will"
- "Perhaps it was for the best."
- "You'll get over it."
- "You must get busy and get your mind off it."
- "You need to get out more and stop thinking so much about yourself."
- "You have to forgive and forget."
- "Death was a blessing."
- "You're still young."
- "You have your whole life ahead of you."
- "You can always remarry."
- "Something good will come out of this."
- "He/she led a good life."
- "It's time to put it behind you now."
- "Be strong. Be brave. Don't cry."
- "Your friends get tired of listening to you."
- "Do you have other children?" or "Be thankful you have other children" or "You could have another child."
- "Think about others who have suffered a greater loss."
- "You should really stop crying so much, you'll make yourself sick and drive your friends away."
- "Why would you want him back? He is so much better off in Heaven."
- "Now you can do all the things you have always wanted to do."
- "He's gone; you're alive. Life goes on."
- "Be glad he/she is not suffering."