

## **Ideas To Help You Comfort Those Who Grieve**

***Mourn with those that mourn...comfort those that stand in need of comfort.  
(Mosiah 18:9)***

When someone we know loses a loved one, it is difficult for us to know how best to help them. We are afraid that we will say or do the wrong thing and make the person feel worse. Each person is different, but here are a few things I've learned about comforting those who grieve.

**Pray to know how to help and comfort those who need it**—As each person is so different, the best way to know how to help someone is to think of ideas you think would be beneficial, and then pray and ask Heavenly Father if it is a good idea. The Spirit will guide you to know if it would be helpful or not.

**Pray for them.** In our loss at how to best help, we sometimes forget that our prayers for those who are suffering can bring great comfort and peace to them.

**Simply send a note or card.** It's often sufficient just to say you are sorry for their loss and that they are in your thoughts and prayers.

**Respect the grieving person's wish for privacy.** Sometimes, after experiencing a loss, a person really does want to be alone. Obviously, you may need to intervene if this goes to the extreme, but it can be healing to have some time alone to deal with his or her feelings.

**Help With Burdens (childcare, taking care of house, meals, and daily duties).** People may feel reluctant to ask you to do these things for them, but these tasks can seem overwhelming when first dealing with such a loss.

**Sometimes it's best to just sincerely say you're sorry, and not try to offer advice or reassuring thoughts.** We want so much to help those who are grieving. We try to think of what we think will bring the most comfort. Unfortunately, sometimes the advice or encouragements we offer can make those who grieve feel as if we are telling them that they should not be so sad, or even that they need to have more faith. Often, just telling someone how sorry you are, and how much you feel for them can be the most comforting thing you can offer.

**If you've had a similar experience, sometimes it is helpful to share with the one who lost.** It's such a horrible feeling when you go through something so sad, and no one around you has ever really experienced the same thing. There's something healing about talking to someone who has been through a very similar experience and come out the other side of it okay. It can give you hope that you, too, will one day heal from this devastating time and have peace again.

**Give people time to grieve.** The grieving process takes time—there are often setbacks. It is not a smooth, constant uphill ascent out of it.

**Allow them to talk when they need to.** Talking about our loss can be therapeutic. You may feel that we would be best to not focus on it, but for us, it is a reality that we think about often, and sometimes talking about it is healing to us.

**Don't push them to talk about their loss if they don't want to.** Not everyone finds talking comforting. Some people may feel that they would prefer to keep their feelings and experiences to themselves. If you gently address the situation, and the grieving person seems to not want to discuss it, don't pursue it any further.

**Don't ask too many details, unless the person seems to want to talk about it.** Most times, the loss of a loved one is an extremely personal event. The person who has lost a loved one may share intimate details about what occurred or events surrounding the loss. But, if they do not offer details, don't push for additional information.

**A small token or gift can show you care and bring comfort.** Sometimes we wonder if it is appropriate to offer a small token or gift to someone who has lost a loved one. The most important thing is just to show the person who is grieving that you love them, that you are thinking of them, and that you support them. A small gift could be one way of doing that.

**Don't shun the person because you are afraid of saying the wrong thing.** This can make people feel like an outcast when they need support the most.

**Be sensitive in what you say around those who have lost.** But, do not make it obvious you are trying to avoid subjects around them.

**Go by the Spirit.** At times a person may want to discuss it with you directly, but at other times they may dread anyone bringing it up, the Spirit can help you to know how to approach the situation.

**Just Do Something!** Most people will be grateful for any effort you make to show you care and are trying to help. Even if it seems clumsy or awkward to you, it will bring the person comfort to know you are trying to help and that you do care.

**If you pray for the Spirit and do your best to follow its promptings, you will bring comfort to those whose hearts sorrow and “lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.” (D&C 81:5)**