

People's discomfort contributes to the out-of-touch or rote comments of "I'm so sorry for your loss" or "My deep condolences." Because we don't know what to say, many times we say things which makes us feel better instead of the widow, like "There, there, you'll be fine—you're so strong," and "You need to move on".

### **What Not to Say**

"God must have needed a center fielder in heaven. I'm sure he's up there playing baseball right now."

"He's in a better place now" or even "Everything happens for a reason."

"Give it time. You'll be fine. Time heals everything. Memories fade."

"He would have wanted..." before proceeding to tell her what *they* thought her husband wanted.

"I don't know how you're doing it-you're so strong. I could never do it."

"You are young, you'll find someone else"

"At lease you don't have kids."

"Let me know if there is anything I can do."

"How are you doing?"

"You'll be okay after a while."

"I understand how you feel."

"You shouldn't feel that way."

"Stop crying."

"At least he's in a better place; his suffering is over."

"At least he lived a long life, many people die young."

"He brought this on herself."

"Aren't you over him yet, he's been dead for a while now."

"There is a reason for everything."

"God's in charge."

"He was such a good person; God wanted him to be with Him."

"Just give it time. Time heals." (Time does not heal, taking the right steps heals.)

"You'll do better next time in love."

"Stay busy. Don't think about it."

"You have to be strong for your children, his mother, etc. (This diminishes their need to take time to heal.)

“Just move on.”

### **Things to Say or Do for a Grieving Person**

“I’m so sorry for your loss.”

“I wish I had the right words. Please know I care and I’m here for you.”

“You and your loved ones are in my prayers.”

“I can’t imagine how you feel.” Then be quiet and let them tell you about their feelings without judgment or criticism.

“I’m here for you.” Better yet, if there is something specific they need, ask if you can do it for them. Ask if you can make phone calls or send emails on their behalf.

“Can I go to the funeral?” This is often an important sign of support.

“Want to talk about what happened?” Many people avoid this question, but it helps the griever to explain it, if they desire, and having a compassionate ear can help them process it more accurately.

#### **Just be present.**

Share a memory about the person who’s gone.

Be empathetic. It’s okay for you to show your feelings.

Continue connecting, even after a few months. Many widows are inundated in the first few weeks, but they need support long after the funeral is over.

Make a list of people who are willing to help and where they can help (childcare, house maintenance, food, yard care, etc.)

Bring over a basket of items that might contain, a new widow’s packet from Soaring Spirits International. Order from [www.soaringspirits.org](http://www.soaringspirits.org), a journal, Book by Susan Hannifin-MacNab A to Z Healing Toolbox-A Practical Guide for Navigating Grief and Trauma with Intention, Kleenex, chocolate, bubble bath, or items you know they might like.

Offer to stay at the house during the funeral.