



## DON'T TELL ME



Don't tell me that you understand,  
 Don't tell me that you know.  
 Don't tell me that I will survive,  
 How I will surely grow.

Don't tell me this is just a test,  
 That I am truly blessed,  
 That I am chosen for this task,  
 Apart from all the rest.

Don't come at me with answers  
 That can only come from me,  
 Don't tell me how my grief will pass...  
 That I will soon be free.

Don't stand in pious judgment  
 Of the bonds I must untie.  
 Don't tell me how to suffer,  
 And don't tell me how to cry.

My life is filled with selfishness,  
 My pain is all I see,  
 But I need you, I need your love...  
 Unconditionally.

Accept me in my ups and downs,  
 I need someone to share,  
 Just hold my hand and let me cry,  
 And say, "My friend, I care."



*-Joanetta Hendel*

**DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE GRIEVING?**

What should I do?



What shouldn't I do?



What should I say?



What shouldn't I say?



## DO

- Be a good listener; offer silent support as needed
- Behave naturally
- Remember that you can't take away their pain, but you can let them know they are not alone
- Continue to call and understand that they don't always return calls right away
- Just help if you want to; don't wait for them to ask
- Bring food to the house without asking and continue for several weeks off and on
- Extend invitations to them, understanding they might change their minds at the last minute
- Treat all members of the family equally, all are hurting
- Help with children, errands, phone calls, etc...
- Be patient and understanding
- Accept and be sensitive to their changing moods
- Allow them to talk about the loss as much and as often as they need to
- Talk openly about the person who died and freely share memories
- Use the deceased's name
- Cry if you feel like crying
- Understand that there is no timeline for grief
- Remember and acknowledge the important dates that are most painful
- Donate to a charity that would be meaningful to the family
- Share good news with them – they can still be happy for others

## SAY

- "I am so sorry for your loss"
- "My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family."
- "I can't imagine how you are feeling."
- "You're not alone, I am here for you."
- "How are you REALLY doing?" and listen to the answer

## DON'T

- Compare your loss with theirs
- Offer help or wait for them to contact you for help, just help
- Tell them what they should do
- Be afraid to talk about the person who died and share memories
- Think that the age of the deceased determines the importance or the impact
- Be afraid to touch – sometimes it's better than words
- Change the subject when they want to talk about the person
- Pry into personal matters
- Ask questions about the circumstances of the death
- Offer advice or quick solutions
- Try to minimize the loss
- Tell them that drugs or alcohol will make it better
- Expect them to be strong and don't complement them on their strength
- Ask how they are doing if you aren't willing to listen
- Assume when they laugh that they are "over it"
- Avoid those who are grieving because you are uncomfortable

## DON'T SAY

- "It was for the best"
- "It could have been worse"
- "It's really a blessing in disguise"
- "Be brave for your family"
- "Don't cry"
- "This isn't the end of the world"
- "You're doing so well"
- "You'll get over it"
- "It's not that bad"
- "Your loved one wouldn't want you to be sad"
- "You'll be okay"
- "Things will be back to normal soon"
- "The first year is always the hardest"
- "It was God's Will"
- "Aren't you over it yet?"
- "Be happy that you had them in your life for so long"
- "You will have other children"
- "It was meant to be"
- "Be grateful you have other children"
- "Time will heal everything"
- "At least they had a long life"