



# GRIEF LITERACY

## Compassionate Condolences

### What to Say:

- “What a [heartbreak, shock, tragedy, deep loss],” followed by invitational silence.
- “I wish I had the right words—just please know I care.”
- “I can’t claim to know exactly how you feel or what you’re going through, but I’m here to listen.”
- “You and your loved one are in my thoughts/prayers/heart.”
- “My favorite memory of your loved one is...”
- Place your hand over your heart as a supportive gesture.
- Offer a hug instead.
- Offer to help with a specific task, like groceries or dependent/pet care.
- Simply be with the person and continue to show up.

### What NOT to Say:

- “At least [your person lived a long life, is out of pain, isn’t suffering anymore, is in a better place].”
- “There is a reason for everything.”
- “Aren’t you over it yet?”
- “You can get pregnant again/have another child.”
- “You can get another pet.”
- “She was such a good person, [higher power/realm of afterlife] needed her.”
- “He did what he came here to do, and it was his time to go.”
- “I know how you feel...”
- “Be strong/positive.”
- “You should/I would...”
- Nothing at all.