



"What Grieving People Want You to Know "

April 2024

There are those moments in life where we find ourselves at a loss for words. Recently at a wake for one of our members, before entering the Chapel, I was approached and asked, "Rabbi, I wish I knew the right words to say and not to say". The first thing that came to mind was one of the most important lessons in life, that in challenging times of trouble or difficulties, just "being there" can be one of the most powerful sources of comfort to others. We have all found ourselves in this situation. It brought to mind a very powerful guide that was given to me many years ago.

" What Grieving People Want You To Know"...

1. I am not strong. I'm just numb. When you tell me I am strong, I feel that you don't see me.

2. I will not recover. This is not a cold or the flu. I'm not sick.

I'm grieving and that's different. I will not always be grieving as intensely, but I will never forget my loved one and rather than recover, I want to incorporate his life and love into the rest of my life. That person is part of me and always will be, and sometimes I will remember him with joy and other times with a tear. Both are okay.

3. I don't have to accept the death. Yes, I have to understand that it has happened, It is real, but there are just some things in life that are not necessarily acceptable, and I pray for strength to cope.

4. Please don't avoid me. You can't catch my grief. My world is painful, and when you are too afraid to call me or visit or say anything, you isolate me at a time when I most need to be cared about.

If you don't know what to say, just come over, give me a hug, or touch my arm, and gently say, "I'm sorry." You can even say, "I just don't know what to say, but I care, and want you to know that."

5. Please don't say, "Call me if you need anything." I'll never call you because I have no idea what I need. Trying to figure out what you could do

for me takes more energy than I have. So, in advance, let me give you some ideas:

--- Bring food.

--- Offer to take my children to a movie or game so that I have some moments to myself.

--- Send me a card on special holidays, birthdays (mine, his or hers), or the anniversary of the death, and be sure and mention her name. You can't make me cry. The tears are here, and I will love you for giving me the opportunity to shed them because someone cared enough about me to reach out on this difficult day.

--- Ask me more than once to join you at a movie or lunch or dinner. I may say no at first or even for a while, but please don't give up on me because somewhere down the line, I may be ready, and if you've given up, then I really will be alone.

6. Try to understand that this is like I'm in a foreign country where I don't speak the language and have no map to tell me what to do. Even if there were a map, I'm not sure right now I could understand what it was saying. I'm lost and in a fog. I'm confused.

7. When you tell me what I should be doing, then I feel even more lost and alone. I feel bad enough that my loved one is dead, so please don't make it worse by telling me I'm not doing this right.

8. Please don't call to complain about your husband, your wife, or your children. Right now, I'd be delighted to have my loved one here no matter what they were doing.

9. Please don't tell me I can have other children or need to start dating again. I'm not ready. And maybe I don't want to. And besides, what makes you think people are replaceable? They aren't. Whoever comes after will always be someone different.

10. I don't even understand what you mean when you say, "You've got to get on with your life." My life is going on, but it may not look the way you think it should. This will take time and I never will be my old self again. So please, just love me as I am today, and know, that with your love and

support, the joy will slowly return to my life. But I will never forget that there will be moments that I will break down and cry and that is okay.....Thanks for "being there"!!!!

A little humor from the "Moshe Files" to keep you smiling

"English Is A Difficult Language"

Let's face it -- English is a difficult language. There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger, neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat.

We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth beeth? One goose, 2 geese. So one moose, 2 meese? One index,

2 indices?

Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend, that you

comb through annals of history but not a single annal? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preacher praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? If you wrote a letter, perhaps you bote your tongue?

Sometimes I think all the English speakers should be committed to be examined

for the verbally insane. In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell? Park on driveways and drive on parkways?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and

wise guy are opposites? How can overlook and oversee be opposites, while

quite a lot and quite a few are alike? How can the weather be hot as hell one day and cold as hell another.

Have you noticed that we talk about certain things only when they are

absent? Have you ever seen a horseful carriage or a strapful gown? Met a sung hero or experienced requited love? Have you ever run into someone who was combobulated, grunted, ruly or peccable? And where are all those people who ARE spring chickens or who would ACTUALLY hurt a fly? You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which an alarm clock goes off by going on. English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race (which, of course, isn't a race at all). That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible. And why, when I wind up my watch, I start it, but when I wind up this essay, I end it. I rest my case.... lol...Time for a cold drink.

Quote of the day: "I thought the dryer was making my cloths shrink, turns out it was the refrigerator".

On behalf of All the Chaplains, May God bless you keep you safe and always keep you in His loving care.

Your Chaplains are available for you 24/7. Should you need a shoulder to lean on or an ear to listen or perhaps

have some good humor to share, don't hesitate to give us a call.

Compliments of your Department Chaplain

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