What to Do at Funerals

Try to:

▪ Respect/honor to lost one
▪ Condolences
▪ A brief story/anecdote/memory of a positive attribute of lost one
▪ Silence (while they respond)
▪ Move on…

Avoid:

“I know how you feel” - grief is a VERY personal thing. Each individual deals with it in his/her own way.

“It’s not that bad” - this puts the speaker & hearer on a comparison scale … avoid this.

“This was God’s will” - none of us are God … don’t make this assumption you know His will.

“You need to be strong for your *children/family*” - again, each person grieves in a personal way.

“Others have it a lot worse” - comparing again …

“You need to move past this…now” - grief has no set time line for recovery and closure.

“I lost my *family/friend* too …” - are you comparing again?

“Suck it up and quit crying” - pretty insensitive, but people have said it!

“God wouldn’t give you more than you could handle.” - this is a misinterpretation of I Corinthians 10:13 speaking of temptation. Not applicable at a funeral in any form.

“He’s in a better place now” - suggests to a griever that they should be happy that their loved one is gone. This is a poorly placed phrase.

“He looks so natural” - really? All pale, lifeless, no emotion? Hope not …

“Let me know if I can help …” - this may seem helpful, but isn’t. Better to be specific about some aid: offer to bring a meal, do an errand or chore, sit & listen, etc.

“This was to be expected” – makes judgement on the life of the deceased. Even a person in poor health, or one that made bad decisions, deserves dignity in death.

“You’re still young … you can …” - examples: have another child, get another pet, start seeing/dating someone, etc. This indirectly puts a timeline on grief, and also discounts the loss felt.

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