

# — SESSION 5 —

## Preachers, Pals & Platitudes

### *Saying Something Stupid Versus Just Staying Quiet*

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Welcome to *The Grief Sessions: LIVE, Session 5*.

The intent may be pure, but a wrong word said to a grieving person can trigger an avalanche of emotions and negative responses.

Take notes because there's a lot you'll want to use the next time you come in contact with a person in grief. But the session is not just to help the non-grieving communicate better—it's also for the grieving who face these moments when words fall flat or come across hurtful. The session helps us figure out how to handle them.



*Instead of “God wouldn’t give you more than you can handle,” say, “Let me come over and do some laundry.”*

## CHART YOUR COURSE

### Mood Meter

Chart where you are emotionally, physically, and spiritually at this moment in time. Don't think about how you *want* to feel, just circle how you *actually* feel. Circle all that apply, then put into words why you circled what you did.

Enraged	Furious	Frustrated	Shocked	Surprised	Upbeat	Motivated	Ecstatic
Livid	Frightened	Nervous	Restless	Hyper	Cheerful	Inspired	Elated
Fuming	Apprehensive	Worried	Annoyed	Energized	Lively	Optimistic	Thrilled
Repulsed	Troubled	Uneasy	Peeved	Pleasant	Joyful	Proud	Blissful
Disgusted	Disappointed	Glum	Ashamed	Blessed	At Ease	Content	Fulfilled
Mortified	Alienated	Mopey	Apathetic	Humble	Secure	Chill	Grateful
Embarrassed	Excluded	Timid	Drained	Calm	Satisfied	Relaxed	Carefree
Alone	Down	Bored	Tired	Relieved	Restful	Tranquil	Serene

Date:

Time:

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## **WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW?**

Write about where you are on your journey: 1) what part of grief you are handling well, 2) what you struggle with or what has blessed you, 3) how you have felt over the past few days (the good, the bad, and the ugly) and 4) what still hurts.

**1) What part of grief are you handling well?**

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**2) What do you struggle with or what has blessed you?**

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**3) How have you felt over the past few days?**

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**4) What still hurts?**

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**Review your grief symptoms from last week. What, if anything, has changed? Have you found new ways of managing your symptoms?**

**Continue to write your story. Writing and remembering are therapeutic!**



## EMOTIONAL ENERGY

As grief progresses, we come to the place where it is necessary to identify and withdraw the emotional energy we had invested in the relationship with the person who has died. Eventually, we must reinvest that energy. This is a part of saying “goodbye” as we find new meaning for life.

## BAD ADVICE

Your Grief is just that – It’s YOUR grief. It is not a thing that anyone else can “fix” or make better by what they say. You will have to go through it at your own pace, and that’s OK! Often people try to “make it better” by saying something wise. Instead, they often make things worse.

### THINGS PEOPLE SAY

### WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE TO THE GRIEVING

“It was meant to be.”

*So, God planned this misery and gave it to me as a gift?*

“Time heals all wounds.”

*My husband is not coming back, no matter what time it is.*

“What’s done is done.”

*When this is said, people tend to hear, “Get over it. Don’t cry over spilled milk.”*

“He’s in a better place.”

*He was doing fine right here, thank you very much!*

“Now, now, there’s no need to cry.”

*This embarrasses a person in grief and short-circuits their ability to lean into the pain.*

“There’s a reason for everything.”

*If I already agree with that sentiment, I don’t need you to tell me. If I don’t agree with it, you’re not going to change my mind.*

“God wanted another angel so he took your daughter to be with Him.”

*So, God kidnaps children for biblically inaccurate reasons? He could make another angel out of nothing. I can’t replace daughter!*

“It was her time to go.”

*I would beg to differ!*

“You’ve got to be strong.”

*Being strong is way over-rated. Being human and being present are under-rated.*



## JUST SHOW UP AND SHUT UP

Just be there for the person and let them know you care. Don't try to "fix" their grief with your words.



What emotional energy have you invested in your loved one? Where should your energies be put in order to begin to find peace?

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What things have people done for you that have helped your journey of grief?

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What are some of the best and worst things people have said to you during this journey?

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What is the worst and best advice about grieving you have ever heard?

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