

Good Advice: Finding the Right Words

LESS HELPFUL	MORE HELPFUL
<u>“BE STRONG”</u>	
God doesn't give you any more than you can handle.	▶ It sounds like this is really hard.
What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.	▶ How are you doing with all this?
You need to be strong like your mother.	▶ I'm so glad you showed up here today.
You need to be strong for your mother (or for your children, family, coworkers).	▶ I can only imagine how you've coped.
<u>“BE FAITHFUL”</u>	
Keep the faith.	▶ I'm thinking of you every day.
This was part of God's plan.	▶ What has helped you get through the past few days?
This was God's will.	▶ I hope things get easier for you soon.
God works in mysterious ways.	▶ I can offer my help, if you like.
God tests our faith.	▶ It sounds hard, getting through these days.
You need to pray more.	▶ I'll be sending you my thoughts and prayers.
<u>“BE POSITIVE”</u>	
Something good will come out of this.	▶ It sounds like it's impossible to see what's ahead.
It happened for the best.	▶ I'm so sorry this has happened.
You are lucky that your father died peacefully.	▶ I was so sad to hear the news about your father.
Be grateful it wasn't worse.	▶ You've had to deal with a lot all at once.
You shouldn't be so angry.	▶ It isn't fair, is it?
You're going to be just fine.	▶ I believe in you.
Keep a positive attitude – it's better for your health.	▶ It's amazing to see you smile with all you are coping with.
<u>“ASKING WHY”</u>	
Why didn't you leave sooner? (your bad job, your abusive spouse, the approaching hurricane . . .)	▶ Sounds like you were going through hell.
Why didn't your sister call you sooner?	▶ I'm sorry to hear no one called you in time.
Why didn't you stop smoking when you found out about the blood clot?	▶ It can be so hard to quit old habits.
Why do you think God is putting you through this?	▶ What you just told me sounds outrageous.
<u>“SOME HAVE IT HARDER”</u>	
Just think of what the Hurricane Katrina survivors have been through.	▶ You already had enough on your plate.
You should feel lucky. What you are going through is nothing like what my mother's generation went through.	▶ I'm so sorry you're going through this.
Your problem is not as bad as what my son is going through with cancer.	▶ I am so sorry this has happened to you.
<u>“GET OVER IT”</u>	
It's time to put this behind you.	▶ This might take time.
You need to keep busy, and get back to work.	▶ I believe you'll know the right time to return to work.
You have your whole life ahead of you.	▶ Allow some time for this.
Just think how you'll be doing by this time next year.	▶ Take all the time you need for yourself.
<u>“I UNDERSTAND”</u>	
I understand how you feel.	▶ I can only imagine how hard this must be.
I know what that's like.	▶ Do you mind telling me what it's like?
I went through a tough time like that too.	▶ Tell me more, if you like.

Revised: 7/27/2018 9:56 AM