



FaithWorks Counseling

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How to Offer Condolences After a Suicide Loss

A Faith-Based Guide to Compassionate Support

Losing someone to suicide is an especially painful and complex experience. Survivors often carry deep grief, guilt, confusion, and isolation. Knowing what to say—or not say—can feel overwhelming. This guide offers compassionate, faith-centered ways to show care and comfort.

What to Say

Use simple, sincere words that express empathy and presence.

- “I’m so sorry for your loss.”
- “My heart aches for you. I’m praying for comfort and peace.”
- “I can’t imagine how hard this must be, but I want you to know I’m here.”
- “Your loved one’s life mattered deeply.”
- “You’re not alone in this pain.”

Guideline: Speak from the heart. It’s not about having the right words—it’s about offering love and presence.

What Not to Say

- “They’re in a better place.”
- “Everything happens for a reason.”
- “You’ll move on soon.”
- “Why did they do it?” or “Did you see this coming?”
- “At least they’re not suffering anymore.”

Guideline: Focus on listening. Resist the urge to explain, compare, or fix.

Ways to Offer Support

- Show up. Call, visit, or check in regularly—especially on anniversaries or holidays.
- Help practically. Bring meals, run errands, or assist with small tasks.
- Remember their loved one. Say their name and share kind memories.
- Be patient. Healing takes time and may not follow a predictable path.
- Pray faithfully. Ask God to surround them with His peace and strength.

Writing a Sympathy Card or Message

Dear [Name],

I was heartbroken to hear about [Loved One]. I can't imagine your pain, but I want you to know that you are not alone. I'm praying that God holds you close and gives you strength for each new day.

With love and prayers,
[Your Name]

Faith Reflections

When offering comfort through faith, emphasize God's grace and compassion, not judgment.

Psalms 34:18 (NIV): *"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."*

Isaiah 41:10 (NIV): *"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*

Avoid suggesting the person's death reflects a lack of faith. Instead, focus on the truth that God's love and mercy are constant, even in tragedy.

Long-Term Compassion

Grief can resurface months or years later. Continue reaching out. Simple messages like "Thinking of you today" can mean a great deal.

Encourage gentle steps toward healing and connection with others who understand. "You've been carrying so much. Have you thought about talking with a counselor or joining a support group for suicide loss?"

Helpful Resources

- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: Call or text 988 (24/7, free, confidential)
- Alliance of Hope for Suicide Loss Survivors: <https://allianceofhope.org>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP): <https://afsp.org>