

# TOP 10 TERRIFIC THINGS CARING PEOPLE SAY AFTER REPRODUCTIVE LOSS

The Institute for Reproductive Grief Care provides a framework for caring conversations:



**#10 I know it's been weeks/months/years/decades since we talked about it. I just wanted to check that you're OK. Would it help to talk about it?**

Emotional reactions after pregnancy and reproductive loss are as unique as fingerprints. However, those that grieve can feel this pain for years – even decades – according to our study . In addition to this pain, there is the worry that others have completely forgotten that the pregnancy – or the attempt to conceive – even happened. Asking about it is a kind and thoughtful way to find out if someone you love needs help.Help them understand that they are not alone.

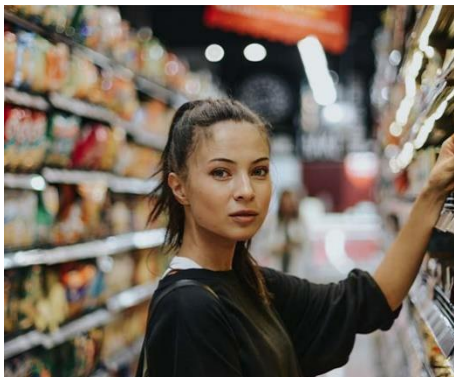
**#9 Would you like a spa / manicure / massage / lunch / dinner / a bottle of wine / weekend getaway? Even better: add “my treat.”**

When life is busy, and you think everyone has forgotten your grief, there is no greater show of love and friendship than simply making time for a loved one. Just a few hours with them, doing something they love, can go a long way in showing how deeply you care. It also validates the grief of pregnancy loss and infertility, which is often ignored in our culture.

**#8 Would you like to have a memorial service or do something to remember?**

Memorial services are an important part of grief in our culture — except when it comes to pregnancy loss and infertility. Culturally, this grief is often perceived as less important than other kinds of grief, which can add a layer of insult to a deep pain.

Just talking about ways to memorialize may be all that it takes to help those you love. Not only does it get them thinking about ways to process their grief, it also validates that their grief is real and that you recognize it..



**#7 Can I run any errands for you? Make any calls? Let anyone know?**

Grief has a way of making us all exhausted – mentally and physically. Simple acts of running errands or making calls become giant burdens when you're grieving. If you're heading to the store anyway, just ask your loved one if there's anything that you can get for them while you're there. Small gestures like these can help relieve them of their burdens, validate their pain, and go a long way in showing how deeply you care.

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### #6 Here is some food that I made for you.

In many parts of the country, it is a tradition for friends and neighbors to deliver food to those who are grieving. However, this tradition is often skipped over for pregnancy loss and especially infertility, which are perceived as less important than other kinds of grief. You can change this! Pop something in the oven and send it over. This small act of kindness for those struggling – especially with the unacknowledged grief of pregnancy loss and infertility – will be remembered for a long time.



### #5 My heart breaks for you. I am sorry for your loss. Is there anything that I can do to help?

These quick sentences can open a door into their heart, and get them to open up and share their pain – a huge step in the grieving process. You are also recognizing their grief as real and valid – a big step as grief after pregnancy loss and infertility is often downplayed or dismissed. Our study shows that unrecognized grief from pregnancy loss can go unresolved for years – even decades. Also show your support by wearing a pin with the “Forget Me Not” flower. The “Forget Me Not” flower is a symbol that we are remembering those impacted by pregnancy loss. Get your pin and other “Forget Me Not” memorial items in our Shop.

### #4 This is not your fault. You have nothing to be ashamed of. You have done nothing wrong. No one is judging you.

Not everyone experiences emotional pain after pregnancy loss and infertility, but those who do may feel an unrelenting anguish and grief. They may be questioning everything that they drank, ate, and did during their pregnancy and/or attempts to conceive. They may be harshly, internally judging themselves. You can help them stop the cycle of self-judgment and pain with just a few kind words.



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## #3 For real — how are you?

People from other cultures find it odd that – no matter what’s happening in our lives – the answer to the question “How are you?” in our culture is always: “Fine.” It’s a reflexive response that ignores reality. When someone you love is struggling after reproductive loss, they may not share it with you. They are likely aware of how dismissive our culture is of this kind of grief. Or they may not be sure how they feel. Or maybe they just don’t want to be a bother or burden to you. Push past the automatic “Fine” answer and ask again. This hopefully opens the door to a conversation about any feelings they may want to share.

## #2 Would it help to talk about it? I don’t know what to say, but I am here to listen.

Similar to #3, these questions are designed to overcome your loved one’s fear of being a bother to you, talking about their feelings or processing their loss. Some people don’t want to talk about their reproductive loss; some do. Show your support by asking more than once to find out.



## And our #1 TOP TERRIFIC thing that you can say to someone impacted by pregnancy or reproductive loss is...

## #1 You are not alone. I am here for you. And I always will be.

If you are swept away in a tide of grief from reproductive loss, nothing brings more comfort than a person who’s your anchor or rock. You can be that person! Let your loved one know that they can be a wreck, they can fall apart, they can look a mess, they can take time to heal, and you will love them through it all. Don’t assume that this is their partner’s job! In pregnancy loss, women’s grief is underestimated; men’s grief is completely ignored. The loss is affecting him too – he may need his own anchor or rock. [The Institute of Reproductive Grief Care](#) offers free Helpful Toolkits for anyone impacted by reproductive loss, including customized toolkits for women who have had a miscarriage, men impacted by miscarriage, family and friends who want to help that includes ways to memorialize.