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What Grieving People Wish You Knew About What Really Helps (and What Really Hurts)



Synopsis

We want to say or do something that helps our grieving friend. But what? When someone we know is grieving, we want to help. But sometimes we stay away or stay silent, afraid that we will do or say the wrong thing, that we will hurt instead of help. In this straightforward and practical book, Nancy Guthrie provides us with the insight we need to confidently interact with grieving people. Drawing upon the input of hundreds of grieving people, as well as her own experience of grief, Nancy offers specifics on what to say and what not to say, and what to do and what to avoid. Tackling touchy topics like talking about heaven, navigating interactions on social media, and more, this book will equip readers to support those who are grieving with wisdom and love.

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Customer Reviews

“This book is tender, compassionate, clear, honest, gospel-rich, and practical. There is nothing distant and theoretical about it, because it’s written out of the deep well of the author’s own experience.”
—Paul David Tripp, President, Paul Tripp Ministries; author, *What Did You Expect?*
“Most of us struggle with what to say and how to help when interacting with a person who is grieving. This wonderful book will help you be more comfortable ministering after a death because you’ll better understand what your family member or friend needs most. I read this book on an airplane, headed for a funeral. I learned helpful things that I was able to use immediately.”
—Steve Grissom, Founder, GriefShare
“In the aftermath of deep loss, grievers struggle to articulate what is helpful. These honest and practical suggestions will equip tenderhearted people to come alongside us as we grieve.”
—Kay

Warren, Æ Cofounder, Saddleback Church; international speaker; best-selling author, *Choose Joy* Æ “Someday, someone close to each of us will die. During that difficult time, the right words can comfort us and point us to Christ. *What Grieving People Wish You Knew* offers great counsel from those who went through the dark days of a loved one’s death. For friends of the grieving, this book can help you to offer comfort. In this book are examples of healing words that grievers need to hear Æ told by those who longed to hear them. These stories from those of us who have grieved, and are still grieving, will give believers the confidence to come and sit with us on the mourning bench. Æ •Mark Green, Æ President, The White Horse Inn Æ “*What Grieving People Wish You Knew* is a timely and priceless resource for men and women who are compelled to live out the Bible’s directive to ‘weep with those who weep’ but feel helpless to do so. This book is profoundly practical, and I am personally grateful to have it as a resource to share with so many who desire to love the grieving well. Æ •Raechel Myers, Æ Cofounder, *She Reads Truth* Æ “Nancy Guthrie writes pointedly about what hurts when we’re trying to minister to hurting people. We can all learn much from poor examples Æ from Job’s miserable comforters. *What Grieving People Wish You Knew* provides an A+ lesson plan in what not to say and do as comforters. Of course, Nancy does not stop there, for she also writes poignantly about Christlike comfort. With wisdom and compassion, Nancy weaves Scripture, her story, and the stories of scores of grievers to encourage, empower, and equip us to esteem grief and to care like Christ as we minister to those who grieve. Æ • Æ •Bob Kelleman, Æ Biblical Counseling Chair, Crossroads Bible College; author, Æ *God’s Healing for Life’s Losses: How to Find Hope When You’re Hurting* Æ “Grief persists as a constant presence in a fallen world. And as common as grief is, so is the silence of friends or family members who aren’t quite sure how to help. Nancy Guthrie’s *What Grieving People Wish You Knew* enters into this silent void and offers the clear and practical voice of experience and wisdom. In a unique and captivating way, Guthrie unleashes the testimonies of numerous individuals who have recently experienced grief. Their words, along with Guthrie’s synthesis, allows the reader to know what truly helps and what truly hurts as we seek to minister to our grief-stricken loved ones. Do you want to be a good friend to those grieving around you? Then this is the book for you. Æ • Æ •Jason Helopoulos, associate pastor, University Reformed Church, East Lansing, Michigan; author, Æ *A Neglected Grace*; *The New Pastor’s Handbook*; and *Let the Children Worship* Æ

Nancy Guthrie teaches the Bible at her church, Cornerstone Presbyterian Church in Franklin,

Tennessee, and at conferences worldwide. She and her husband, David, are the cohosts of the GriefShare video series used in more than 10,000 churches nationwide and also host Respite Retreats for couples who have experienced the death of a child. Guthrie is also the host of Help Me Teach the Bible, a podcast of the Gospel Coalition.

What a wonderful, helpful book for GriefShare facilitators, counselors, friends, or anyone who just wants to be someone who helps rather than hurts at a time of grief. No matter how long or short of a time you have been exposed to those who are grieving, you will find practical ways to help in this book. It's also a great resource for those who are grieving in that it may help them better articulate their needs to others. Most people really don't understand the nature of grief due to a death, but truly want to help. If you are grieving, you can help them help you. Although Nancy Guthrie is very much acquainted with the nature of grief first-hand, this book is largely a compilation of notes and stories from a wide variety of grieving people telling what helped them the most in their journey. You won't regret this purchase.

I can't recall reading a more helpful and practical book, and at just the right time, as the latest from Nancy Guthrie. I was aware of the author as a teacher that the women in my church respect. In addition to the author, it was the subject of the book that got my immediate attention. You see, our family lost a loved one just over four months ago. Grief hits everyone differently. I saw that with my family when I lost my Mom twenty years ago, and again recently as I lost my father-in-law. This book was exactly what I needed to effectively be able to minister to family members who are grieving, and it's going to be extremely helpful for all who read it and are the beneficiaries of the wisdom contained within. The book is dedicated to the thousands of GriefShare facilitators in churches. I was familiar with GriefShare as a family member is benefitting from a GriefShare group and several family members are receiving their daily email each morning. The author and her husband are not strangers to grief, having lost two small children. Since those losses, she has interacted with many grieving people. She asked them to tell her what others said or did for them that was especially helpful or meaningful in the midst of grief. She asked them what they wish those around them had understood about their grief. She has incorporated what those grieving people told her throughout this book. Her hope for the book, which I certainly found to be the case, is that we will find ideas and encouragement and be emboldened to engage, instead of avoid, the grieving people who are all around us and are waiting for someone to interact with them about the loss of their loved one. I found in these pages many helpful things to say (and not to say)

with those who are grieving, and to do (and not to do) with those who are grieving. There are just too many helpful suggestions included in the book. You just have to read (and highlight) those suggestions and examples for yourself. The author concludes this helpful and practical book with a few questions that often arise concerning how to comfort the grieving and her suggested answers. She also shares suggested Scriptures to share with those who are grieving, many of which are from the Psalms. I highly recommend this book for all, as we will all face grief ourselves as well as be in situations where we are ministering to family, friends, co-workers and church members who are grieving. This is one of my top books of the year.

I am so glad I read this book. Many suggestions on how to comfort a grieving person that I simply would not have thought of on my own. Excellent advice on how NOT to give pat spiritual answers but how to use scripture in a way that gives comfort and hope.

I really hope, no pray, that Nancy's book will set the heart of anyone who has struggled with the question of what to do or say to another who has recently lost a loved one at ease. Or maybe the loss has been some time passed and you don't quite know how to bring up a cherished memory. Well, with the help of some who have traveled this road of grief, Nancy has put together some biblical ideas of how to approach your relative, friend, acquaintance, or colleague. This book is a must for anyone who has asked the questions, "But what can I do? What should I say?"

The author does a really good job at conveying the pain involved in the grief process. This helps the reader better understand how they might approach others. I personally would have appreciated a few more suggestions (there are lots of things we are told not to do) but the big idea of "show up" was very helpful.

I have enjoyed many of Nancy Guthrie's other books, all of which have taught me much. This book is probably one of her best. No doubt it has been forged through the fire of her own incredible loss of her two young children, many years ago. The tone of this book is gracious truth but also careful challenge. Her incredibly pertinent chapter on grief expressed via social media alone was worth the price of the book. However, each chapter presents wise truth and compassionate insight. I will be a better friend and companion to those suffering as a result of the wisdom Nancy shared. This book is a gift to the church especially, but anyone who knows someone grieving or herself is grieving will benefit from this highly practical book. Tremendous resource for pastors, grief counselors, etc.

This book will surely make you think about what you say to grieving people. Nancy Guthrie not only use her thoughts but actually interview grieving people. As a GriefShare leader is was very helpful for me and I will continue to use it when talking to others about grief.

An excellent and easy to read work on how to handle grief when visiting friends families or coworkers. Likely will open your eyes to what is best said (and un-said) when others are in grief.

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