

# SESSION 2

## TOPIC: COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS

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### INTRO

This session focuses on hurtful things well-meaning people sometimes say, and how it's an opportunity to educate them so they don't hurt someone else.

### SCRIPT

1. Last week's unfinished business.
2. Report on phone calls. How did they go?
3. Report on caring plan. How did they go?
4. NOTE: The next session is dedicated to sharing pictures and personal mementos with the group so we can all get to know your special person. Mementos of all sizes are welcome.

### DISCUSSION

1. **Discuss how we are hurt by the ones we love.** What are some of the clichés and euphemisms we've heard?
  - You must get a hold of yourself.
  - Can't let yourself fall apart.
  - Be strong, or be strong for the children.
  - I know exactly how you feel.
  - Well, at least s/he didn't suffer.
  - It's over now. Let's talk about something pleasant.
  - The living must go on living.
  - S/he led a full life.
  - Time will take care of it.
  - God will never give you more than you can handle.

### REMEMBER

- ✓ Start and end on time.
- ✓ Keep conversation moving and productive.
- ✓ Ensure every participant has an opportunity to share or pass during the discussion.
- ✓ Protect the conversation from being monopolized.
- ✓ Stay supportive yet neutral.

### MATERIALS

- Notebook & pen
- Index cards & pens
- Refreshments
- Nametags
- Tissue

### HOMEWORK

- ✓ Please listen
- ✓ Empowerment
- ✓ Please see me through my tears
- ✓ Self-care assignment

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2. **What is happening when people use clichés and euphemisms?** Why do they do it?
    - How do you handle these statements and ones like them?
    - How do you feel about family or friends when they speak this way?
    - How do you begin to forgive them?
    - Do they really know what to say?
    - Did you know what to say before you had your direct experience confronting the feelings you're living with?
    - Are they afraid of our feelings? How do they feel about themselves?
  3. Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross called these statements phony baloney. Perhaps all we want is for someone to really listen to us. Perhaps just want a simple honest expression of feelings, like:
    - Could you tell me about it?
    - What happened?
    - I can't imagine how painful this must be.
    - What was your relationship like?
    - Simply saying "I'm so sorry," and then have them shut up and listen to us.
  4. **Discuss Companions** (handout # 4). We really have a choice about how to deal with folks who seem unable to deal with us. We can get angry, write them off, and never speak to them again. We can tell everyone else how insensitive they are. Or, we can choose to recognize that they just never learned how to deal with pain, and we can try to preserve the relationship by educating them.

## CONCLUSION

1. **Review this session.** Encourage participants to read hand-outs, journal their thoughts, and try this week's Resilience Rx self-care tip.
2. **Phone numbers for next week's calling.**
3. **Bring pictures or mementos to next week's session.**

If you think you might have trouble with this, talk to your phone contact about those feelings, then come with a picture or memento and see if you really feel what you anticipated you would feel. It will be a good learning opportunity about yourself.

**REMINDER**

**BRING NEXT WEEK**

- Picture of loved one**
- Mementoes**