Hello Bean - Free Resource 01

When Words Help, and When They Don't

Conversations about pregnancy and infant loss, from someone who has experienced it.

I've experienced pregnancy loss, and sometimes I still don't know what to say when someone else experiences it.

This resource is a collection of personal reflections and observations about words we use, the things we sometimes struggle to say, and the conversations that happen after loss.

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Conversations about pregnancy and infant loss, from someone who has experienced it.



People don't always know what to say, when someone loses a baby.

Between you and I, I want to acknowledge right from the beginning, sometimes I don't know what to say either.

I've gone through pregnancy loss. I've had to say to goodbye to my own baby, Bean. Naturally, you might think that having gone through something like that would make it easier to find the right words when someone else experiences a similar loss.

It doesn't always.

I know what my experience was like, but that doesn't mean I automatically know what someone else is going through. Their circumstances may be different. Their feelings may be different. Even the things that bring them comfort may be different from what brought me comfort.

Sometimes I find myself wondering whether I should say something, ask a question, or simply listen.

I designed this resource to share some of my observations about the words we use around pregnancy and infant loss. This is not intended to be a script for anyone, nor is it to tell them how to handle these conversations, but instead it was created to make room for a little more understanding.

Things People Say, Sometimes

"At least you can try again."

The notion of a future pregnancy shouldn't take away from the baby who died. For some parents, these words can make it seem as though their baby is being treated as replaceable.

"Everything happens for a reason."

Sometimes there isn't an explanation that makes what happened any easier to accept. And not everyone finds comfort in trying to explain or make sense of a loss.

Things People Say, Sometimes (continued)

Things People Say, Sometimes

“Don’t you think it’s time to move on?“

Grief doesn’t follow a timeline, or run on a 9-5 schedule. When someone returns to work, settles back into their routines, or seems fine, doesn’t mean they’ve stopped healing or grieving. You can move forward with your life and still miss, love, and remember your baby. Just because life continues, doesn’t mean the loss is forgotten.

“I can’t imagine what you’re going through.”

This one can be taken differently. Some people welcome and appreciate the acknowledgement that their experience is difficult. Whereas others may feel the conversation ends there.

Why It Can Be Hard to Find the Words

Not everyone who says something that may be perceived as uncomfortable is being careless or insensitive. Truthfully, sometimes people genuinely don’t know what to say, and they’re trying.

I’ve been on both sides of that uncertainty.

Even though I’ve experienced pregnancy loss, I sometimes struggle with what to say when someone else experiences a similar loss. I know what my experience was like, but that doesn’t translate to me knowing what other people might be going through.

I think part of that struggle comes from wanting to recognize what happened without saying something that might make an already difficult situation even harder. I can spend so much time thinking about what to say that I forget it’s ok to simply be present.

Sometimes I just don’t have the words, and I’m learning that I don’t always need to.

Words That Leave Room for Conversation



Over the years, I've come to realize that not all conversations about loss requires an explanation or an attempt to fix or make things better.

Sometimes, simply acknowledging what happened is enough to begin a conversation.

Below are a few examples of words that make space for someone to respond to in whatever way feels comfortable for them. These aren't scripts, and they won't feel right for everyone.

A Few Ways to Acknowledge Someone's Loss

- "I'm sorry about your baby."
- "I've been thinking about you."
- "Would you like to talk about them?"
- "I remember."
- "I wanted to reach out, but didn't know what to say."
- "How are you doing today?"

Some people may want to talk about their baby, while others may not feel ready or may prefer to keep those conversations private

I think what's important is recognizing and understanding that we can't always predict how our words will be received, even when our intentions are good.

Beyond the First Conversation

What happens after the initial phone calls, messages, and offers of condolences?

For the person who is grieving, life continues. Routines resume, conversations become different, and the loss may no longer be mentioned as often.

But that doesn't necessarily mean the person who experienced the loss has stopped thinking about it.

To some families, remembering an important date, saying the baby's name, or checking in months, and sometimes years later, may be meaningful. For others, privacy or a different kind of connection may feel more comfortable.

A Few Things to Think About

Here are a few questions worth considering, whether you've experienced pregnancy or infant loss yourself, or are supporting someone who has:

1. Am I acknowledging their experience without assuming it's the same as mine?
2. Am I listening, or am I feeling pressure to find something helpful to say?
3. Is there room for this person to tell me what they need, if they want to?
4. Can I be comfortable admitting that I know what words to say?
5. Have I considered reaching out again after some time has passed?

A Final Thought

Believe me when I say, I don't have all the answers. Experiencing loss hasn't given me a handbook for navigating grief, whether it's mine, or someone else's.

What I do have is my own experience, and the understanding that every person's story is different.

And sometimes, that's the perspective I bring into a conversation.

A Note from Hello Bean

This resource reflects personal experiences and observations.
It isn't professional guidance or a set of rules for navigating grief.
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