

What To Do When I've Hurt
My Bereaved Loved One

**W H E N
W O R D S C U T
D E E P**



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“Words have the power to tear down or build someone up, so think before you speak. Words do hurt when spoke in anger. Words spoken in love heal a broken soul... but remember, it’s how you make someone feel with your words that can never be taken back.” ~ Author Unknown

Whether intentional or not, words have the power of destroying even the strongest of relationships. Although people may forget exactly what was said, they will never forget how a person made them feel. Read ahead to learn a few simple guidelines that may help you to navigate through tough situations where you find that your own actions and/or words were found hurtful by someone you care about.

- Say “I’m Sorry.” It sounds simple, but sometimes admitting that you were wrong is a hard feat. Saying you are sorry, does not have to be fancy or elaborate. In fact, a small and simple, yet genuine and heartfelt apology can go a long way. Saying, “I am so sorry, I never meant to hurt you” and adding nothing more is a great step towards healing a torn bond.
- When apologizing, do not try to justify or rationalize your actions. Attempting to explain why you said what you did, or minimizing the impact your words had, implies that you do not believe you are at fault. Your actions were perhaps not intended to be hurtful, but that does not change how hurtful they were. Making a defense will often lead to a more painful experience for your loved one and will make the apology feel less sincere. Avoid following your “I’m sorry” with “but...” or saying “All I did was...”.
- After apologizing, make sure your actions reflect your regret. Saying you are sorry and then continuing to display hurtful behavior will only continue to tear down a relationship.
- Do not expect to achieve forgiveness on your own schedule. Forgiveness does not happen over night and cannot be demanded. Allow your friend or loved one space as they work through the process of forgiveness and trust.