



## How to Provide Comfort to Those Going Through Tough Times

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When life hands you a tough situation, you may need to lean on other people for comfort. But what if *you're* the person that needs to provide the shoulder? It can be a difficult job since ***you need to be the one that stays strong for the other person.***

How you provide comfort will vary depending on who you're comforting and what they've gone through. However, there are universal tips to keep in mind when you're consoling someone.

**Here are some strategies that can help you provide much-needed comfort to others:**

- 1. Uplift them.** When someone approaches you for comfort, chances are that they're not asking you for your advice. ***More likely, they just need someone to be there for their emotional needs.*** Avoid trying to solve their problems unless you're asked for advice. In that case, you're free to provide any advice that you have.
- 2. Listen well.** It's always a good idea to develop your listening skills. A part of being a good listener is truly striving to understand what the other person is saying. Remember that ***you can provide a certain degree of comfort just by lending an open ear to the person suffering.***
- 3. Offer unconditional help.** Sometimes it's comforting just to know that the other person is there. Tell the person that's suffering that they can discuss their problems with you any time they need a lift to help them get through.

4. **Give a hug.** It'll certainly vary depending on the relationship that you have with the person you're comforting, but you can provide physical comfort with a hug. Hugs simply make people feel better! The human touch can melt the soul and warm them with comfort.
5. **Be understanding.** You might not know what it's like to go through the tough time that you're helping with, but that doesn't mean that you can't strive to understand. Do your best to ***try and understand where this person is coming from.***

## Understanding Grief

If the person you're helping is dealing with loss, you'll also be helping them with their grief. Grief is a natural emotion to go through when you find yourself facing a traumatic loss. If you gain a better understanding of grief, you may be able to assist with comfort in a helpful manner.

## The Stages of Grief

Grief is expressed in different stages and different people spend varying amounts of time on each stage. Sometimes the stages aren't even expressed in the same order.

Grief usually starts with the initial shock of the loss and oftentimes denial accompanies this distress. Then pain and anger sets in, which may last for a long time. Sometimes depression also sets in before the person journeys into acceptance.

While you don't want to push a person through the stages too fast, ***you do want to do whatever you can to help them along to acceptance.*** When they're angry, be an open ear and try to reassure them. Help them see their problem or loss from a different perspective.

Depression can be difficult to help with since the person tends to lose interest in the world around them. You and your shoulder to cry on can make a difference. Show them that the world hasn't given up on them, so they shouldn't give up either. With your support, and the help of a professional, eventually acceptance will win out.

When someone you know is going through a rough time, use these tips to guide you in consoling your loved one. The comfort you bring them may be the one thing that helps them make it through to better days.