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**WHAT TO SAY AND DO DURING DIFFICULT TIMES**

VIENNA, Va., December 1, 2014 - When those around us face tough times, we often find ourselves at a loss for words. A helpful publication by Robbie Miller Kaplan, **“How To Say It®When You Don’t Know What To Say: The Right Words For Difficult Times: Illness And Death,” (2008)** offers a solution - hundreds of suggestions on oral, written, and nonverbal communications that are sure to comfort those in need.

Upon learning that someone you know lost a loved one, you might quickly respond by writing a sympathy note. But waiting to send condolences is OK too. “It’s in the weeks and months ahead, when mourning takes place, that people might most appreciate a note,” says Robbie Miller Kaplan.

Kaplan offers some other strategies for preparing heartfelt condolences, which can be sent the “old-fashioned” way – on printed cards or notepaper – or via technology, such as e-mail or online Guest Books.

1. Wait a day, a week or a few weeks to digest the news and collect your thoughts before writing your note.
2. Begin with a sentence that expresses your sadness for the loss. Use the following sentences to articulate your heartfelt thoughts, memories, anecdotes, or any way your life has been touched by the deceased.
3. Draft your note first. Then, edit, revise and proofread before writing your final note.
4. Allow the note to sit for a day before sending it. Re-read it to ensure it reflects the true message you’d like to convey.
5. Include your address on the envelope – or your e-mail address in the online Guest Book; to make it easier for recipients to respond to you, should they wish.

**About the Author**

Robbie Miller Kaplan is a nationally recognized writer with an expertise in communications. She is the author of “How to Say It When You Don’t Know What to Say” and blogger for leading online memorialization site Legacy.com. Her website is:

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