



Harmful Phrases

VS

Helpful Phrases



"You shouldn't cry, be strong!"

This implies that showing emotions is not being strong. Strong people can show emotions. It's not a sign of weakness but rather it is a form of our body releasing emotions.

"This is a difficult situation. I'm here for you. If you want to be by yourself, I can also give you that space."

"Don't be upset, stay in Chardhi Kala!"

While the concept of Chardhi Kala is central to Sikh beliefs about life and optimism, acknowledging the pain of a tragedy is an important way to express our emotions.

"You don't always have to be optimistic, and it's normal to feel sadness and pain. Acknowledging these feelings is one way we can release them and begin the healing process."

"If I were there, I would have killed the gunman, or saved more lives. I can't believe some people just hid."

No one knows what they will do in a violent attack, and second guessing each person's actions is not helpful. Hiding to stay safe is an important and often the best strategy to stay alive.

"I can't imagine what it was like to be in that situation. I'm so grateful you survived. You are a blessing in my life."

"Stop thinking about what happened, it will just make you upset. Only think about happy things."

Telling someone to stop thinking about the traumatic event will not help or prevent the person from thinking about it. It may only keep them silent with their thoughts.

"I'm here to listen, I hear it's important to share what happened."

"Don't be angry or question God/Waheguru. Don't question hukum (God's will)."

It's not unusual for people to have anger at a higher power for "allowing" a tragedy of great magnitude to happen to a community or person. Being able to express this to people of the same faith may help the person feel accepted and find their path to spirituality within the faith.

"What happened was unfortunate and it has caused us all a lot of pain. How can we support you during this difficult time and help you heal? I pray for love and turn to paath (prayers) and read Gurbani to guide me through this difficult time."

"I don't want to keep hearing about the shooting, it just scares and upsets me."

While this phrase shows your need to protect yourself from secondary trauma, it can also cause a person to shut down rather than seek additional support.

"I'm here for you but hearing about the shooting is difficult for me. Are you open to speaking with someone else in the community, or even a counselor? I want what's best for you."

"Don't talk about anything in front of the children, it will just make them upset."

Children are impacted by the violence, regardless of whether they were present during an attack. While we do not want to retraumatize them, letting them know that they can speak with trusted adults is important.

"What happened at the Gurdwara was horrible and many people, including myself, are upset about it. If you want to talk, I'm here to listen. If you have any questions, I'll do my best to answer them as honestly as I can."

Scan Me!



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