

COMPASSIONATE CARE GUIDELINES

Compassionate caregivers are agents of grace who bring God's love to people experiencing loss after a disaster. Survivors experience all the common God-given emotions such as grief, pain, anger, loss of direction and purpose, and even anger towards God. These feelings are natural and should be validated as natural.

DO...

- SEE yourself as an agent of grace.
- MEET people where they are.
- OFFER assurance that they are loved and not forgotten.
- SHOW empathy, respect, gentleness, patience, and kindness.
- LISTEN non-judgmentally and VALIDATE their feelings.
- HEAR their story and their heart.
- SPEAK SOFTLY and carry a big heart.
- FOLLOW UP the next day with needed resources or an encouraging word.
- REMIND them to reach out and follow up with necessary agencies.
- BRING something to the homeowner, such as a case of water, cleaning supplies, a meal, a toy for a young child, etc...

DON'T...

- CONTRADICT or CORRECT their feelings.
- Try to FIX their problem for them, which would only lead to frustration.
- PROMISE anything, but say you will see what can be done.
- CALL them victims. They are survivors.
- PRY into personal or family history.
- FOCUS on your experience.
- DIVULGE what is said in confidence.
- PUBLISH their names or addresses publicly online or on social media.
- POST their photos on social media without written permission.
- FORCE your faith or theology on them. We are not there to convert them, but to show love by letting our gentle deeds do the talking.

REMEMBER...THERE IS NOTHING MORE HELPFUL TO SURVIVORS OF DISASTER THAN TO EMPOWER THEM TO OWN THEIR RECOVERY.