



DON'T

Ignore anniversaries
 Avoid me
 Act like I'm wearing a sign saying, 'UNCLEAN!'
 Try to stop my tears or freak out when I cry
 Tell me how strong I am
 Change the subject -
 if you've asked me how I am because you're feeling upset when I start talking about my child
 Give me advice
 Don't treat me a certain way because it worked with another grieving person
 Make analogies to show you understand
 Describe my past acute grief as if its no longer part of me
 Judge my grief
 Impose a timetable on my grief
 Say
 'God only does it to people who are strong'
 'God won't give you more than you can handle'
 'I know how you feel'
 'You've got to move on'
 'The first year is always the hardest'
 'You've got terrible times ahead'
 'I suppose you knew that was going to happen'

'It was God's will'
 'He's better off dead'
 'You wouldn't have wanted him to live the way he was'
 'She could've been a drug addict'
 'I've been dreading ringing you up'
 'Your child wouldn't want you to be upset'
 'How do you really feel?'

DO

Ring me before a special date and give an open offer to help
 Acknowledge how difficult special days can be
 Think about what you're saying before you open your mouth
 Listen and be there - let me prattle
 Say my child's name out loud
 Cry with me
 Talk about how *your* grief feels
 Get to know me and find out what I want
 Understand that I'll never be the same as I was
 Understand that my view of death has changed
 Ask what you can do to help
 Say:
 "I just don't know what it would be like to lose a child"