

What to Say, What not to Say

*A discussion about grief, comforting the bereaved, and
how to keep your foot out of your mouth*



Objectives

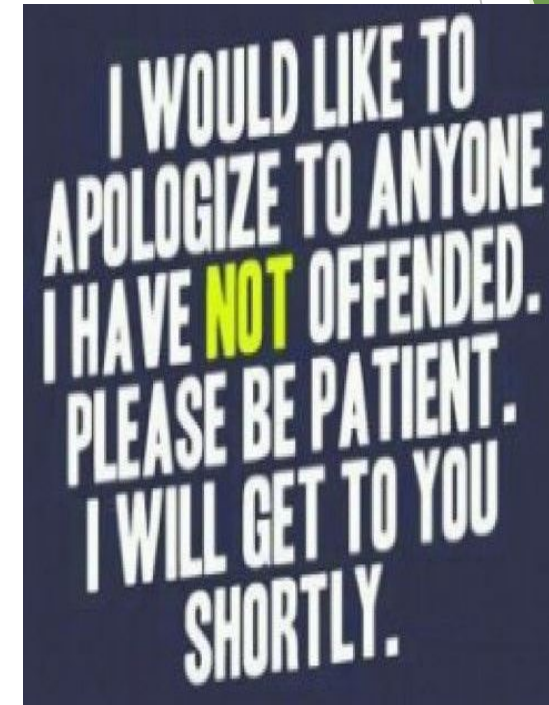
- *Gain a general understanding of the stages of grief*
- *Learn to recognize loss and bad news in all of its forms*
- *Become more self aware*
- *Be a more confident comforter*

About me

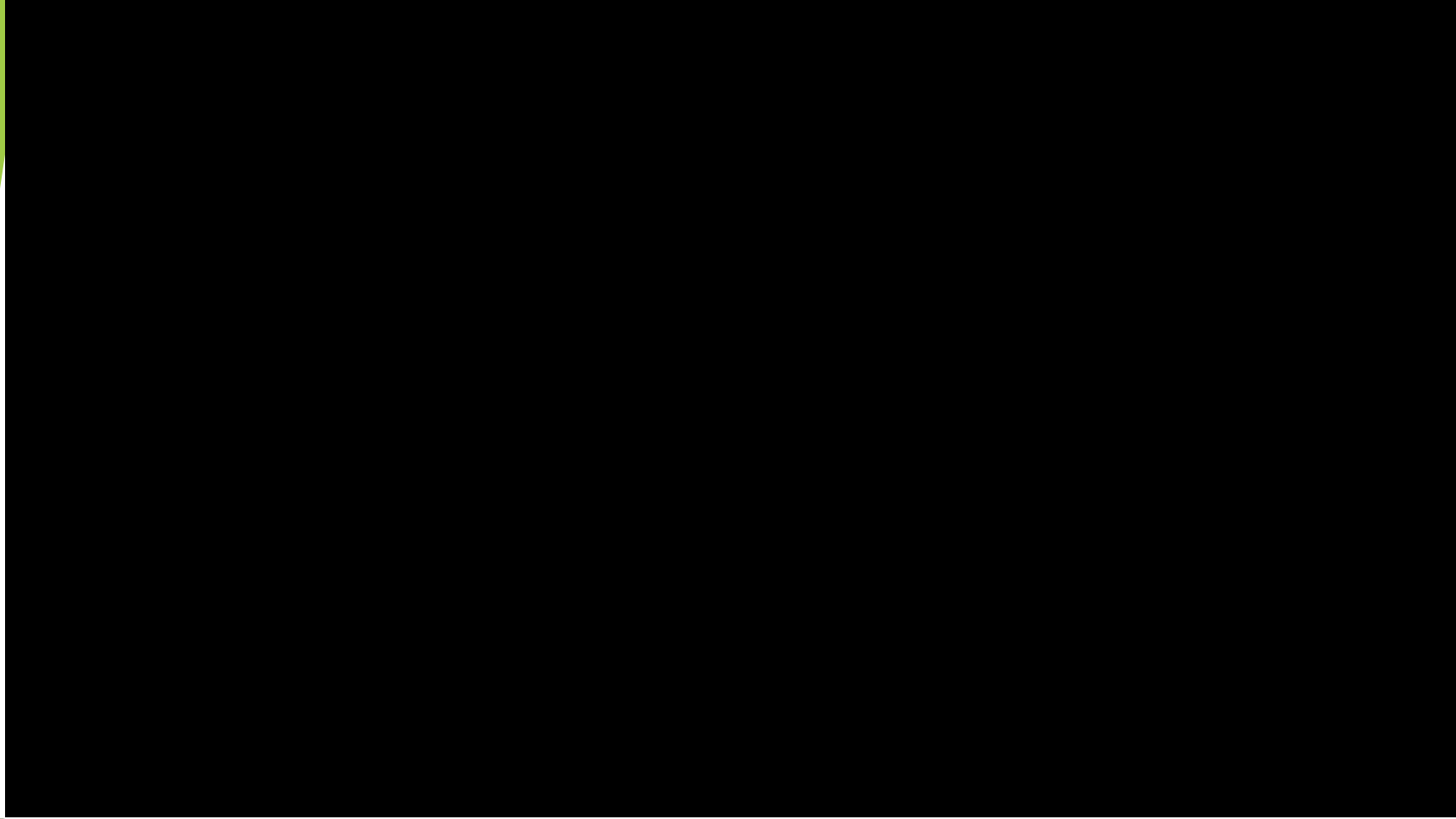
JOHNSON
Funeral Home 



We've all been there!



I never know what to say...



JOHNSON
Funeral Home 

The 5 stages of Grief Kubler Ross Model

- *Denial*
- *Anger*
- *Bargaining*
- *Depression*
- *Acceptance*

Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle



Information and
Communication

Emotional
Support

Guidance and
Direction

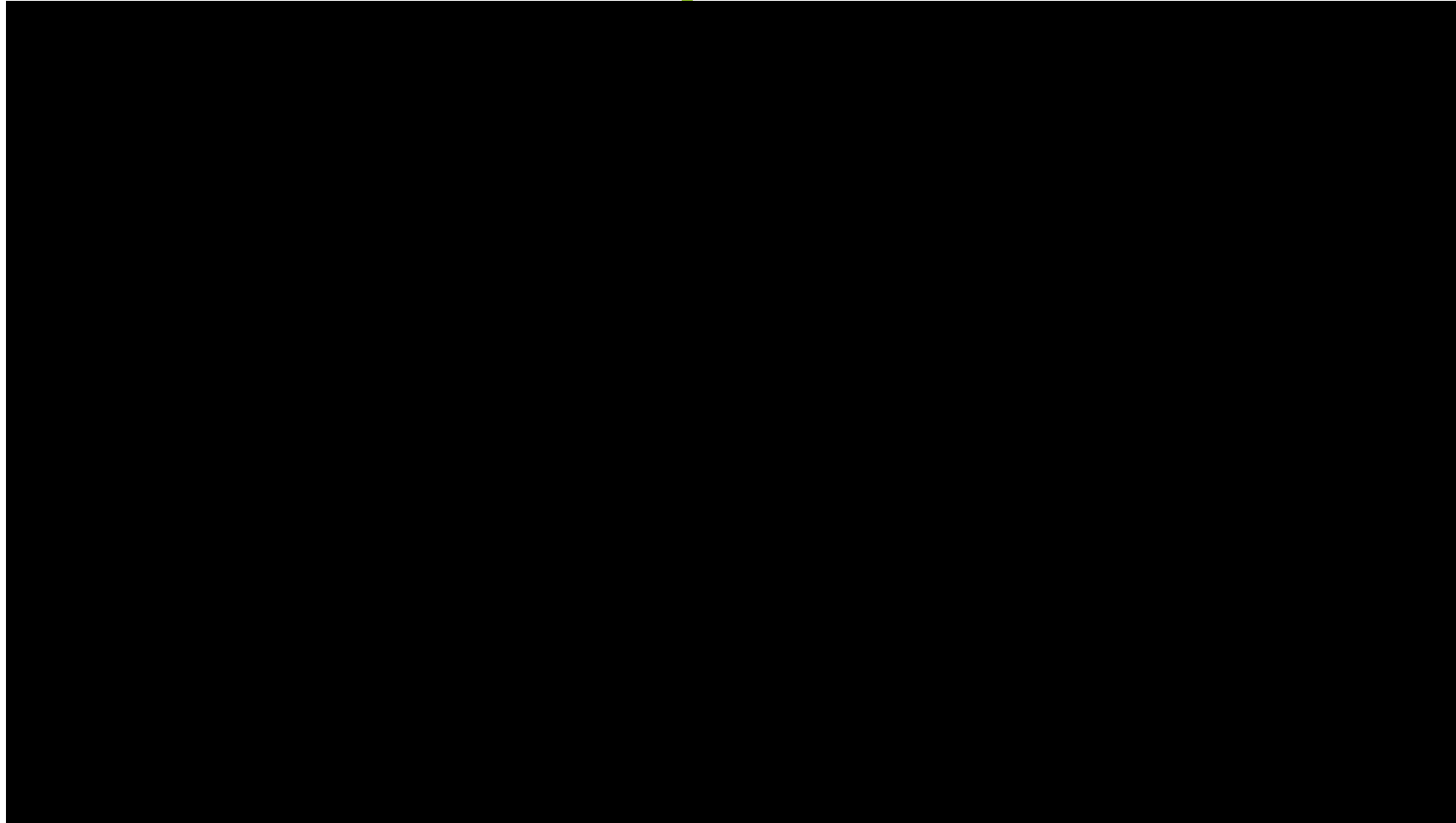
JOHNSON
Funeral Home



The 5 stages of Grief

- *A basic understanding of stages of grief...how can we use this to help others?*

The 5 stages of Grief



Types of bereavement Situations

- Everyday Life bad news (not life or death)
- Terminal diagnosis
- Death
 - Long drawn out illness
 - Sudden unexpected health related death
 - Death by accident

Disenfranchised Grief

- Suicide
- Pet Loss
- Still-Birth
- Abortion
- Miscarriage
- Infertility
- Loss of a friend



What not to Say



What not to Say

Absolute No No's

“I KNOW how you feel...”

Suggesting that it is for the best

Getting too personal

Getting religious

Making it about you and what you need

“At least _____”

Self Awareness

Situational Awareness

Factors affecting the bereaved

Age of deceased/type of illness or death

How close are you to this person...really...?

Try to put yourself in their shoes

Know your role, know yourself, know your weaknesses

Be cognizant of adding to their sense of being overwhelmed

Too scared to say anything for
fear of offending?

What can I do then? What can I
say?

Are there any foolproof
statements?

Examples of the “right” way

“I’m sorry for your loss”

“I’m sorry your going through this, that must be really hard”

“I’m deeply sorry”

“I don’t know what your going through, but I want you know I’m here for you”

“I’m here for you” or “What can I do for you”

Examples of the “right” way

“_____ meant so much to me”

“I remember when_____ did this or that”

“I really loved_____”

“You and your family are in my thoughts/prayers”

“I truly don’t know what to say”

Suggestions for appropriate action

A phone call (be cognizant of adding to overwhelming them and KNOW YOUR ROLE)

A lunch invitation (be cognizant of adding to overwhelming them and KNOW YOUR ROLE)

Provide Meaningful Heartfelt service

Let the dust settle, then provide meaningful heartfelt service

Suggestions for appropriate action

A hug

A handshake

A quick social media message of sympathy

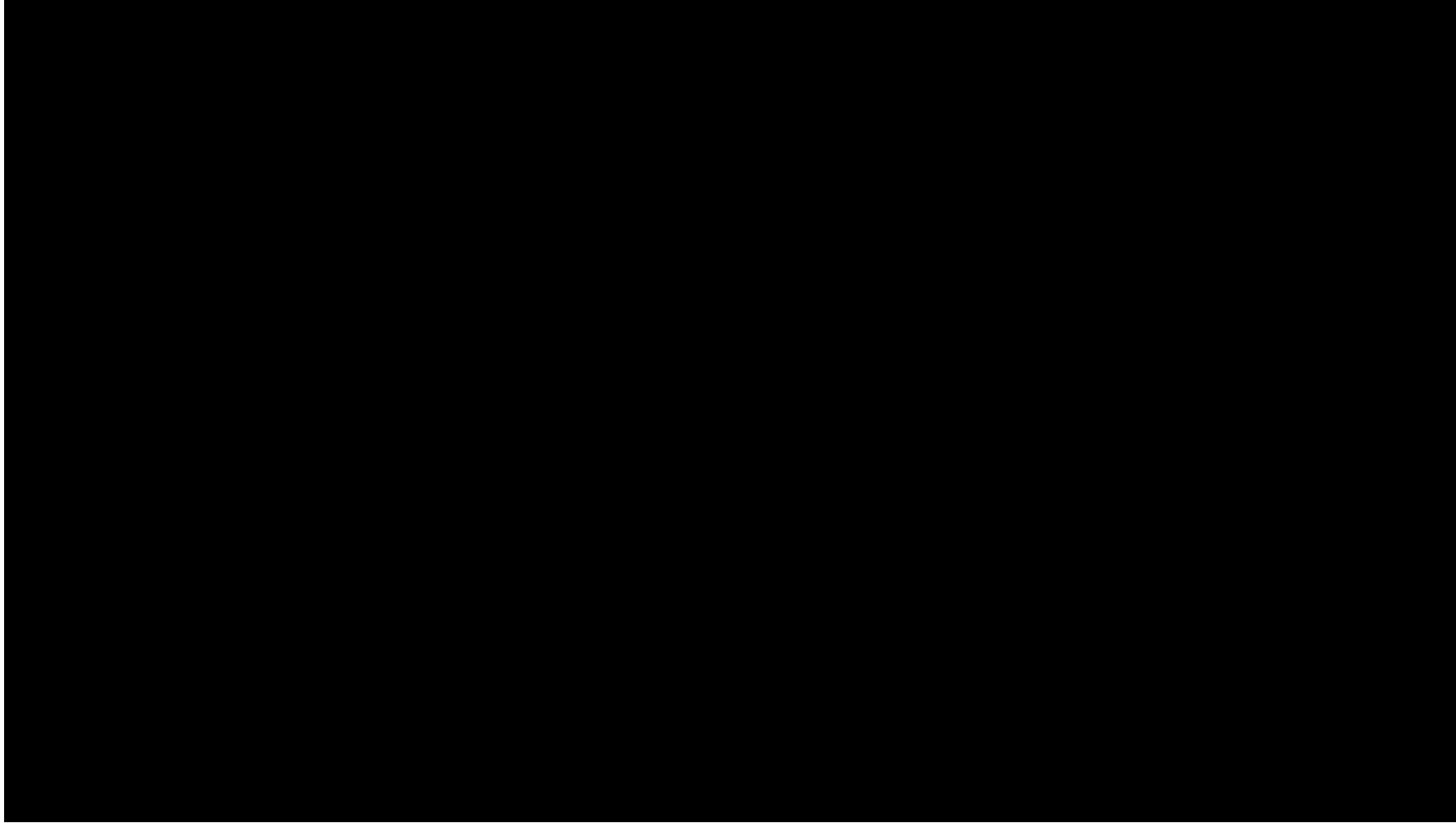
Sign up for a meal train (organize a fundraiser)

Contribute financial where feasible

Be genuinely kind and show empathy



Genuine Empathy is Key



JOHNSON
Funeral Home 

Everyone you meet is
fighting a battle you
know nothing about.
Be kind. Always.