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Why Are We So Bad at Talking About Grief? New Book Explores What Happens When Words Fail

A compassionate, practical guide for people navigating grief and for those who want to support them but don't know how.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LITTLETON, Colo.—Grief is universal. Talking about it isn't.

Whether facing loss personally or trying to support someone who is, many people discover the same uncomfortable truth: nobody really teaches us what to say, what to do, or how to navigate grief when it arrives.

[*What Not To Say at a Funeral: An Unexpectedly Humorous Guide to Showing Up When It Matters Most*](#) by [Amy Havis](#) explores what happens when loss collides with everyday life and offers readers something many wish they had sooner: honest conversation, practical guidance, compassion, and permission to acknowledge that grief is often messy, awkward, confusing, and deeply human, with some humor thrown in.

"Nearly everyone will experience grief, and nearly everyone will eventually support someone through grief," said Amy Havis. "Yet so many of us feel completely unprepared for both."

Through personal experience, insight, humor, and practical wisdom, *What Not To Say at a Funeral* examines the complicated realities surrounding loss, not simply how we mourn, but how we communicate, support one another, and continue moving forward when words feel inadequate.

The release arrives during a period when conversations surrounding grief, loneliness, caregiving, mental health, and community have increasingly entered public conversation, while many people continue reporting feelings of isolation during periods of loss.

For Left Field Publishing, the book represents exactly the kind of conversation-starting project the company was built to champion.

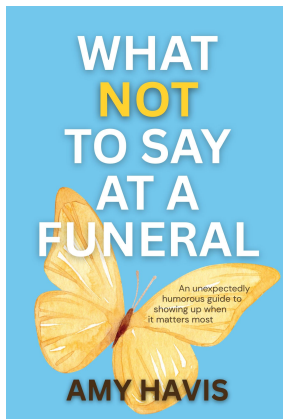
"This book immediately resonated with us because almost everyone has experienced some version of this problem," said Kristen Gilligan of Left Field Publishing. "Either you're grieving and feeling isolated, or you desperately want to help someone and worry you're saying the wrong thing. This book creates space for both."

Katherine Rose Woller, bestselling author of *Calling It Off: Memoir of an Almost Bride*, says the book offers something many readers desperately need: "With humor, humility, and profound vulnerability, Havis gracefully and honestly tackles the subject we so often avoid. Blending personal narrative with

thoughtful research and practical wisdom, *What Not To Say At A Funeral* offers compassionate guidance for when life's worst 'what-ifs' become reality. This book goes beyond telling us what to say. It teaches us how to show up. A wise and deeply human guide reminding us that in moments of loss, presence matters more than perfection."

What Not To Say at a Funeral will be released on Tuesday, October 6, 2026 in paperback, ebook, and audiobook formats. Review copies and interviews available. The book contains bonus content such as discussion questions and a handy summary list of what to say and what not to say. A pre-order campaign is being set up with indie bookstore [My Book Celler](#) in Arvada, Colorado for signed copies as well as an author tour.

ABOUT THE BOOK



For readers drawn to BRENÉ BROWN, IT'S OK THAT YOU'RE NOT OK, and THE ART OF SHOWING UP, this is a humorous grief guide. Want to help someone who's grieving but don't know what to say? A compassionate, practical guide to supporting people through grief.

Not all losses come with instructions. And most of us are never taught what to say when someone is grieving—so we say nothing at all.

Drawing on lived experience and deep empathy, Amy Havis explains why common phrases often cause harm—and offers better alternatives that communicate care, presence, and respect.

After losing her infant daughter, Amy Havis came face to face with how ill-equipped most of us are—not just to grieve our own losses, but to support one another through them. Drawing from lived experience, real-life scenarios, and hard-earned insight, Havis offers practical guidance for friends, families, coworkers, and communities navigating loss together. Part narrative non-fiction, part social guide, the book invites readers to let go of platitudes, resist silence, and choose presence instead. For griever and the people who love them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amy Havis leverages her background as a communications strategist to share a practical perspective about how people navigate difficult conversations and life's hardest moments. After experiencing profound personal loss, Amy became a passionate advocate for replacing silence with presence and connection. Her writing invites us to show up—at home, at work and in grief—with honesty, empathy and heart. She lives in Colorado with her family. *What Not to Say at a Funeral* is her first book. Visit him at www.amyhavisauthor.com, www.mattstrolloauthor.com, Instagram: [amy.havis/](https://www.instagram.com/amy.havis/), Facebook: [amy.cochrum](https://www.facebook.com/amy.cochrum), LinkedIn: [amyhavis/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/amyhavis/).

ABOUT LEFT FIELD PUBLISHING

Left Field Publishing is a small Colorado publisher dedicated to publishing bold, unexpected books while building communities around reading, writing, and storytelling. Through publishing, educational initiatives, reader programs, literary salons, and community partnerships, Left Field aims to create more opportunities for stories and the people who love them to thrive. For more information, visit www.left-field-publishing.com