

SYMPATHY CARD ETIQUETTE 101

Rules to follow when writing a condolence message

USE GENTLE LANGUAGE

Avoid using the words "death" and "died" in your sympathy card message. Instead, use gentler words like "passing" or "loss".



KEEP YOUR MESSAGE SHORT AND SWEET

If you're worried about saying the wrong thing, keep your message short & sweet. The act of sending the sympathy card alone lets your recipient know you care.

AVOID SAYING THINGS LIKE "EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON"

Even with the best intentions, this is not likely to be comforting to the grieving person.



AVOID SAYING "I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL..." AND GIVING ADVICE

Don't assume that you know how they are feeling - everyone grieves differently & phrases like this can take away from this individual process. It also makes the message about you. You should also avoid spouting advice on what the bereaved person should do. Instead, focus on providing comfort and support.

KEEP YOUR MESSAGE SECULAR

Be sensitive about expressing strong religious sentiments in your condolence card if the person you are writing to does not share your beliefs.



KEEP IT POSITIVE

Do not vent your feelings about any disagreements or arguments that you may have had with the deceased in the past, or any regrets you may have, in your sympathy card. This is not the time or place for this discussion. Your sympathy card should only speak about positive memories.