



# Links Players

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## Hold your tongue

*If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. (James 1:5, NIV)*

I played in my club's member-member tournament for years with the same partner. We weren't the most talented duo, but we were championship flight when it came to having fun. We threw down matching outfits each day of the tournament, and each year the pressure mounted to up our clothing game.

The shenanigans reached their peak with the 2010 Masters caddie jumpers. These threads, without a doubt, brought the most laughs and cost us the most strokes. Try playing in one someday, and you too will discover they're designed for carrying clubs and not swinging them.

Our friendship has remained, but we no longer team up for the member-member. In fact, I can't recall the last time I played. I have not sought a new partnership but have been open to an invitation should one get extended, which just so happened recently while at MD Anderson with my wife.

The text arrived around 5:00 pm. "Hammy, you have a member-member team? I'm looking." I must admit the prospect of teaming up with a former club champion piqued my interest.

As I sat in bed working on my laptop that night, I received a text from another top golfer at the club. Before reading its content, I mused how odd it would be to get asked again, on the same day no less, considering I haven't played the tourney in years.

Turns out I wasn't even close.

It read, "Hey amigo, I'm reaching out to you to get your advice and prayers. I was recently diagnosed with stage 3 melanoma and am looking to faith-based friends who have had cancer affect their lives."

Gulp.

How does one react to such a gut punch?

Today's verse is a good place to start. If you don't know what to say, ask God. (Come to think of it, that's good advice in all situations.)

As one who has been through a fair share of trials, I'm gaining wisdom on what to say to those who are suffering. Moreover, I'm learning what not to say.

Our natural tendency is to jump in and fix a situation with words. Often it hurts more than it helps.

"I know what you're going through" isn't accurate in most cases. "Let me know if I can do anything" usually puts a burden on the afflicted.

May I offer some advice? When someone reveals they are hurting, let your first instinct be "quick to listen, slow to speak" (James 1:19). If you do feel the urge to respond, share "only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs" (Ephesians 4:29).

So many of us listen to respond according to our needs. By asking God for wisdom, we can learn to hear and give responses suited to their needs.

**Prayer: Lord, you have given us two ears and one mouth. Grant us the wisdom to use them proportionally, so we may better serve one another humbly in love.**

--

Drew Hamilton

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