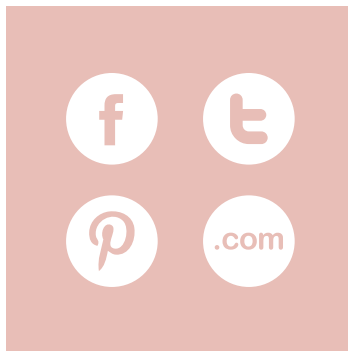




# 122+ WAYS *to Care Well*



*Dedicated to supporting caregivers and those in need of care during a life crisis*



A friend has cancer. A neighbor lost their job. A parent is elderly.

Individuals who need our comfort and care are all around us. The problem, however, arises when our heart says “Go” but our mind says “No.” We may tend to avoid these situations because we don’t know what to say or do.

Does this sound familiar to you?

Caregiving doesn’t have to be complicated. My hope is that when you read this book of simple and practical ideas, something will inspire you to reach out and care for someone in your life who is suffering. May these ideas bless you and those that you care for along your journey.

Wisdom of the Wounded was founded on the belief that many are blessed when we share our experiences. If you try one of these suggestions or have a caregiving story, we’d love to hear from you. Please email me the details at [karen@wisdomofthewounded.com](mailto:karen@wisdomofthewounded.com).

Care well,

Karen Mulder  
Founder

Wisdom of the Wounded

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## CAREGIVING BASICS

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# Caregiving Basics

In any caregiving situation, there are four basic guidelines to help ensure that you offer loved ones the attention and support that they need. Learn more about these guidelines in the following pages.



## PRAY

Whether before, during or after a caregiving experience, prayer helps ensure that our caregiving reflects the heart of God. In praying before we offer care, we acknowledge our reliance on God's strength and healing. Prayer in the midst of care directly communicates our support for our friend, reminding them of the comforting power of the Holy Spirit (remember: ask permission to pray with a friend as well as what their prayer requests are). Following up your care with a commitment to continue praying offers additional encouragement and support for the one in need.



## LISTEN

Compassionate empathetic listening is a caregiving guideline that is often taken for granted or overlooked, but it's often the most powerful way you can help a person who is suffering. To listen well you must offer your complete, undivided attention. You must also commit to hearing more than speaking, resisting the urge to give advice or tell your own story. When you respond, acknowledge the person's pain and ask clarifying questions. You may also encourage them to name their own feelings, struggles and thoughts.



## RESPECT THE GRIEF JOURNEY

Grief is a normal and natural journey by which a person makes a healthy adjustment to any significant loss in his or her life. Anticipating and accepting the emotions a grieving person experiences will let them know you are open and kind, offering room for them to process and feel what is happening for them in healthy ways. Emotions you may observe in a grieving friend include shock, denial, depression, anger, fear and bargaining. As you welcome and listen to these emotions without managing them or offering tips and advice, you help a grieving person journey towards acceptance. Remember: stay present and gracious as you engage the wounded's grief.



## PRESERVE THE DIGNITY

“Human dignity” can be defined as one's self-worth. Our caregiving should not diminish a person's feelings of self-worth/self-respect. Whether we care for a co-worker who is going through a divorce, a friend who has cancer, or for a spouse or parent, we need to remember that the person is first of all a child created by God. So engage their thoughts, feelings, struggles and dreams in light of that truth. When you wonder how to respond, ask yourself what you would want done to you in that same situation.

# Thoughtful Gifts

- 1 Give the gift of **restaurant coupons** to someone going through a crisis. Going to a restaurant gives the person the opportunity to get “up” and “out.”
- 2 Surprise someone with chocolate. Gifts of **chocolate** might include a hot fudge sundae, one extra special truffle, or a basket filled with chocolate products: hot fudge sauce, chocolate covered potato chips, and so on.
- 3 Cook a **dinner** and offer a choice of two courses. Bring food in disposable containers or include your name on returnable containers.
- 4 For recipes, caring tips, and how to create an online sign-up sheet that makes it easy for friends, family and church groups to provide meals, go to “**Take Them a Meal**” at [www.takethemameal.com](http://www.takethemameal.com).



Bake homemade cookies or brownies for parents and bring them frozen so they can have the delight of sending fresh goodies in their children’s lunch boxes or surprising them with a special after-school snack.





6

Homemade chicken soup has mysterious healing powers. Bring a pot of this marvelous recipe to lift someone's spirits.

### JULIE'S CHICKEN SOUP

*a recipe by Julie Newton*

#### Ingredients:

- whole chicken fryer
- chicken bouillon
- ½ package\* of celery, chopped
- ½ package\* of carrots, chopped
- bag of noodles (I use the large, no yolk.)

1. Cook whole chicken fryer for 2 hours (put salt and chicken bouillon in water – bring to boil then turn down).
2. After chicken is cooked, take it out of the pot to cool.
3. Add seasonings\*\*, celery, carrots to pot and cook for 30 minutes, then add noodles. (I usually add water to pot to make a big pot of soup and have extra liquid. If I add water, I add some salt and more chicken bouillon.)

*\*I usually use whole package of both and chop in big sizes.*

*\*\*Seasoning I add: celery seed, ground oregano, Italian, ground thyme, dill weed, rubbed sage, tarragon, whole basil. I put a lot of all seasoning (just pour it in) and even more of tarragon (this is the "magic" of the soup).*

- 7 Give a grieving person a bag of **hard candies**. Sucking on candy helps to prevent crying in public places.
- 8 Who can resist a piece of **homemade apple pie with vanilla ice cream** or other extravagant goodies? Not me.
- 9 For the sports enthusiast, create a **sports basket**. Include such things as: a coupon for delivered pizza, copy of Sports Illustrated, trail mix, chips and dip, popcorn, favorite team t-shirt, and a good sports movie.
- 10 On a hot summer day, bring your neighbor a frosted glass of **freshly squeezed lemonade**. This special gift can refresh both body and soul. Even better, bring a whole pitcher and talk while sipping lemonade together.

11

Kid's version of the above:  
Bring tall glasses,  
vanilla ice cream,  
cold root beer and  
straws, and make  
root beer floats.  
Yum!





12

Receiving a note or card is like being hugged. Neither the eloquence of the words nor the elegance of the stationery is as significant as the care expressed.

- 13 Bring a **hostess basket** filled with an array of treats, from chocolate kisses to fresh fruit to home-baked cookies. Then they will have something to offer visitors and/or hospital staff.
- 14 Perk up a person's day by bringing a **special teacup** with a variety of tea bags or a **pretty mug** with flavored coffee.
- 15 Send **sympathy cards** expressing some of your personal thoughts: words remembering something that you admired or appreciated about the deceased loved one and personal caring prayers. These personal notes will continue to bring quiet joy and encouragement every time they are read. (A **scrapbook** in which to save all the notes and cards is also a long-term meaningful gift.)
- 16 Elderly people feel the cold more, so give the person a **cozy lap blanket**, afghan, bed jacket or snuggie.
- 17 Who doesn't love **flowers**? They're a wonderful gesture of caring.



18

Build a bird feeder for the outside of a window for moments spent watching and identifying the beautiful visitors. You might want to add a bird book to the gift.

Consider the questions:

What does this person enjoy doing during normal/healthy times? Are they able to do that activity now?

*Example:* For someone who enjoys writing notes and letters, it would be delightful to receive some attractive writing paper or cards, a new pen, some stamps, and maybe even one of those wonderful lap desks.



20 “We had a banker friend who created an account for us at her bank, knowing that our expenses were about to rise and our income could drop.” (Brian was diagnosed with colon cancer.) “Then, she let our mutual friends know they could **donate anonymously** to it.” —Brian Mansfield

21 Offer to **alleviate a person’s financial crisis** by loaning funds. In many cases, a loan allows the person in crisis to maintain their dignity. Or offer support/assistance with an anonymous gift of money. If appropriate, offer to help set up a crowdfunding system such as GoFundMe.

22 Give the person one of the beautiful **thoughtful gifts** from [laurelbox.com](http://laurelbox.com), an online store that offers gift boxes designed to nourish a heart after loss. You could also create your own gift box.

23 If someone is in the hospital, bring them a **comfy new robe** to wear during their stay. It will be a delightful and welcomed surprise.

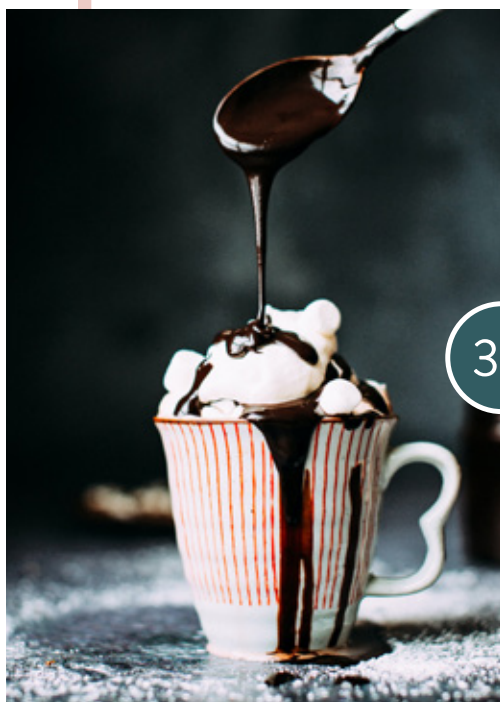
24 Give a **book of prayers**. Richard J. Foster’s [\*Prayers from the Heart\*](#) and [\*Get Well Wishes: Prayers and Poems for Comfort and Healing\*](#), by June Cotner are some of my favorites.

25 Small thoughtful gifts can mean so very much more than one would think. Examples include: a **fragrant votive candle** to sooth the senses and a **lavender-filled sachet** to place over the eyes for relaxation. Little things do mean a lot!

26 Create a **basket of beauty or grooming products**. Include lotion, perfume, special shampoo, nail polish in a new color. Or create a personalized basket filled with items that the person needs or might enjoy.

27 Give the grieving person a **journal**. Many retailers, such as [promptlyjournals.com](http://promptlyjournals.com), offer journals designed for the grieving and offer prompts to help the grieving person express their thoughts and feelings.

- 28 Hire someone to come to the hospital or the home to give the person a **manicure**, a **professional back rub**, or a **haircut**.
- 29 When it seems a friend's life has been turned upside down, give a **daily devotional** such as [\*Jesus Calling\*](#) by Sarah Young.
- 30 When their son was tragically killed in a biking accident, some friends started a **memorial scholarship fund** in his name. Each year, they continue to remember their friend's loss with a note and a check.
- 31 After the loss of a child, one of the most thoughtful things one can do is to send **pictures** and **videos** of the child, especially if the parent hasn't seen them before.
- 32 Share a **special talent or skill**. Billy Graham, in [\*Hope for the Troubled Heart\*](#), writes "A story is told about Beethoven, a man not known for social grace. Because of his deafness, he found conversation difficult and humiliating. When he heard of the death of a friend's son, Beethoven hurried to the house, overcome with grief. He had no words of comfort to offer, but he saw a piano in the room. For the next half hour he played the piano, pouring out his emotions in the most eloquent way he could. When he finished playing, he left. The friend later remarked that no one else's visit had meant so much."
- 33 During a crisis, a small gift such as a **small cross** or a small frame with an **encouraging Bible verse** in it can act as a comforting reminder of God's constant presence.



## Make and share this Chocolate Sauce.

This recipe from Loretta Newton is quick, easy, and so delicious. Give a jar of sauce with vanilla ice cream and/or chocolate cake, and chances are it will bring a smile.

### CHOCOLATE SAUCE

#### Ingredients:

- 2 C sugar
  - ¼ C flour
  - ⅓ C cocoa powder
  - 2 C milk
  - 1 tsp vanilla
  - 4 T butter
1. Whisk together: Sugar, flour, cocoa.
  2. In saucepan: Combine milk, butter, and vanilla. Heat and stir until butter is melted.
  3. Add sugar mixture.
  4. Bring to boil, stirring constantly until thickened, about 5-7 minutes.



# Words that Help or Don't Help

35

Say “I love you!” often. We all know that the three little words “I love you” can make a powerful difference in another person’s life. There are other three-word powerhouses which can make a big impact. Here are eight to try:

“I truly care.”      “I’m so sorry.”  
“I miss you.”      “Count on me.”  
“It must hurt.”      “Let me help.”  
  
“Thinking of you.”  
“I appreciate you.”

- 36 Say, **“I know you are hurting, and I really care about that. If you want to talk about it, I’ll listen.”** Then let the person talk without interruption.
- 37 Tell them, **“You have been in my thoughts.”** That is a greeting which will allow them to choose a response. If they feel a need to share their feelings or thoughts, they can do so, or choose to say simply, “Thank you,” and go on to talk of other things.
- 38 Remember: Any show of concern will help. The following simple sentence says it all: **“I’m so sorry about your trouble.”**
- 39 Say, **“I can’t even imagine how much you must hurt”** or **“how lonely you must feel”** or **“how devastated you must be!”**

- 40 During a very difficult decision-making time, it is helpful to say, “Whatever you decide to do—if you need or choose X, Y, or Z, **I will be here.**”
- 41 Allow them to cry. Cry with them. Say, “**I am so sorry that you are going through this,**” or “**Your pain breaks my heart.**” (But do not say things like, “It will be ok.”)
- 42 Please do NOT give them advice. It may be tempting to do so, especially if your friend is involved with an issue you have strong beliefs about. Please remember to avoid judgement. Instead ask the person, “**What are your options?**”
- 43 If a friend is angry, **help her ventilate her feelings.** Don’t defend the party in question.

45

Pray in person or over the phone. If this is too difficult for you, write a prayer of your own or copy one and give or send it to them. This is helpful because they can read it over and over.

- 46 A person usually wants to talk about his or her illness (or crisis) and to tell their story. It’s the number one topic on his or her mind. So gently say “**Tell me about ...**”
- 47 As they tell you their crisis story, **you don’t have to say anything.** Just **hum along** by making quiet, compassionate sounds like “hmmm...,” “ohhhh...,” “ahhhh...,” “oh nooooo...”
- 48 Don’t push someone who is struggling to “get well,” or to “get on with their life.” Instead, help the person make an effort to **accomplish one simple thing** during the day. It doesn’t matter what it is...make a call, pay a bill, keep a dental appointment, get a haircut.
- 49 Someone who is elderly, ill, or disabled still appreciates when others, especially friends and family, value his opinions, skills, and advice. So please **ask him for help.**



44

Say, “I’ll go with you.”

To have a friend go with you when you are facing new and frightening situations (seeing a lawyer, psychologist, or doctor, finding a new apartment, and so on) is a greatly valued gift.

## Avoid saying:

“You’ll get over it.”

“I’m sure it will be just fine.”

“You look awful.”

“You look great.” (*Implying that the person should also feel great.*)

“Are you over your loss yet?”

“My uncle had the same disease and died (or lived.)”

“Well, here’s what I think you should do...”

“God doesn’t promise us a rose garden.”  
(*Or other trite sayings.*)

“What have you learned from this tragedy?”

“Well, you know what the Bible says:  
‘Forgive 70 times 7.’”  
(*Or some other pulverizing verse.*)

“Tomorrow will be a better day.” or  
“Look on the bright side.”

“Count your blessings” or  
“Things can’t be that bad.”

“Call me if you need anything” or “What may I do for you?”  
(*These are too vague*)

“She (or he) is in a better place.”

*Avoid statements that begin with “You should. . .” or “You will. . .”*

50 Ask a person who is struggling **questions that will help clarify their thinking** and unload a heavy heart. Some questions that have been helpful are:

- What do you feel like talking about today?
- What are you thinking (or feeling) today?
- What worries you the most? This question is especially helpful to ask someone who has cancer or other serious illness.

51 **“Be real. Admit your honest feelings to me.** If the news stunned you, say so. If you don’t know what to say, say just that. If you suddenly feel tears coming, cry. If you are overwhelmed with pity and compassion, admit it. When you allow your true feelings to show, you give me permission to also ‘let go’ and express my honest feelings.”

–Charles Swindol, [\*Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life\*](#)

52 Phone regularly to say, **“I’m thinking of you.** You do not need to return this phone call, I just wanted you to know that you are in my thoughts.”

53 In a crisis, please **do NOT say that you understand how they feel!** Even if you have gone through a similar experience, it is not the same as their experience. Although the words, “I understand” may sound comforting, they are not. Please respect the fact that everyone’s experience is totally unique.

54 After a tragic death, **avoid asking probing questions** such as “Did she smoke?” or “Was he wearing a seatbelt?” or “Was there drinking involved?” When someone is suffering these questions are beside the point. If the person died by suicide, avoid phrases like “killed himself” which implies the person who died was to blame. Help your friend or loved one grieve the death of a special person rather than focusing on the circumstances surrounding their death.

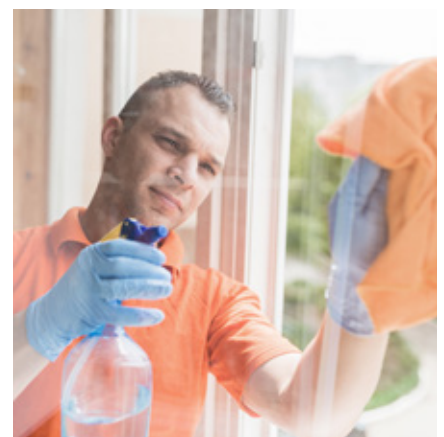
# Special Services

**56 Make your offer specific.** Say, “I would like to come over Monday at 3:00 to bake cookies,” “...read you a book,” “...clean your kitchen,” “...wash your windows,” or whatever. If you say, “Call me anytime for anything,” they won’t know what you want to do or when you are free, so they probably won’t ask.

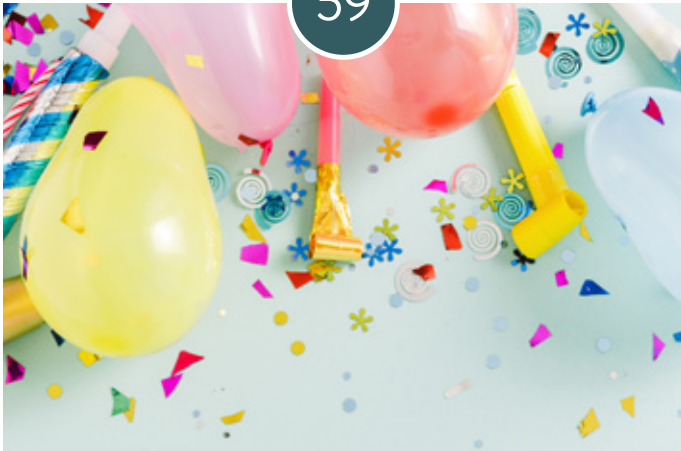
**57** Consider establishing a weekly or monthly “**Movie Night**” for a suffering friend. Ask them to list their favorite movies or TV series, then add five of your own suggestions. Coordinate a time when you could watch a movie together. If they do not have a subscription streaming service perhaps you could invite other caring friends to help chip in to contribute financially for a period of time.

58

For a friend who is ill, a wonderful gift of a maid for a month goes a long way. Hire someone to clean the house and to handle other domestic duties once a week. Or if housework is something you enjoy, offer to do it yourself!







Offer to decorate the house for Christmas or for a birthday party.

- 60 Ask the person if there's **someone they might like to visit them**. Sometimes people are just too tired or too shy to initiate these contacts.
- 61 Offer to **drive your friend where he needs to go**. He may be too tired or too distracted to drive.
- 62 With the person's permission, ask if there are any **gifts, cards, or wrapping paper** that you could pick up.
- 63 Phone when you go to the grocery store to **see if anything is needed**. They might be feeling helpless when their family needs or wants something.

- 64 Offer to **do something for the person's children**: play with them, tutor them, or take them to the park or to see their grandparents.
- 65 Offer to **take children overnight**, or offer to **baby-sit** even if the parents stay home. This allows for some time together or alone.
- 66 Help children attend birthday parties by bringing some **pre-wrapped children's birthday party gifts** to the home for future use. Indicate the contents with a post-it note.
- 67 When a parent who is suffering must miss a special program or event in which their child is participating, please **take photographs or a video**.



Offer to write thank-you or other types of notes for them. They may want to show gratitude to those who have helped their family and them, but might be too tired and weak.

68



**69 Offer to do personal errands and chores:**

- Water plants
- Tidy up house or apartment
- Drop off/pick up dry cleaning
- Wash car and/or fill up gas tank
- Bring mail to the hospital
- Ask for a list of errand needs

**70 Volunteer to make or return phone calls during their crisis.**

- 71 Offer to read their favorite sections of the newspaper to them, even though they are ill and do not have the strength to hold a newspaper. For example, if they are a Detroit Tigers fan, read to them what the paper said about yesterday's game.**

Help the major caregiver in their life. He or she needs some uplifting too! Help him or her wash the car, mow the lawn, drive the kids to activities, vacuum the house, or do the laundry. Invite him or her out to a movie or for dinner or to play tennis, and so on.

72

# Outings

**73** Everyone has times during the week when they tend to feel most alone. Evenings and weekends, in particular, can be tough. Make a **standing date** to go to a movie or out for dinner, or extend an invitation to join you in taking a fun weekly class.

**74** Instead of lecturing a couple to “get out of the house and do something fun” after a tragedy such as a miscarriage, send them dated **coupons for a dinner** at their favorite restaurant and **movie coupons**.



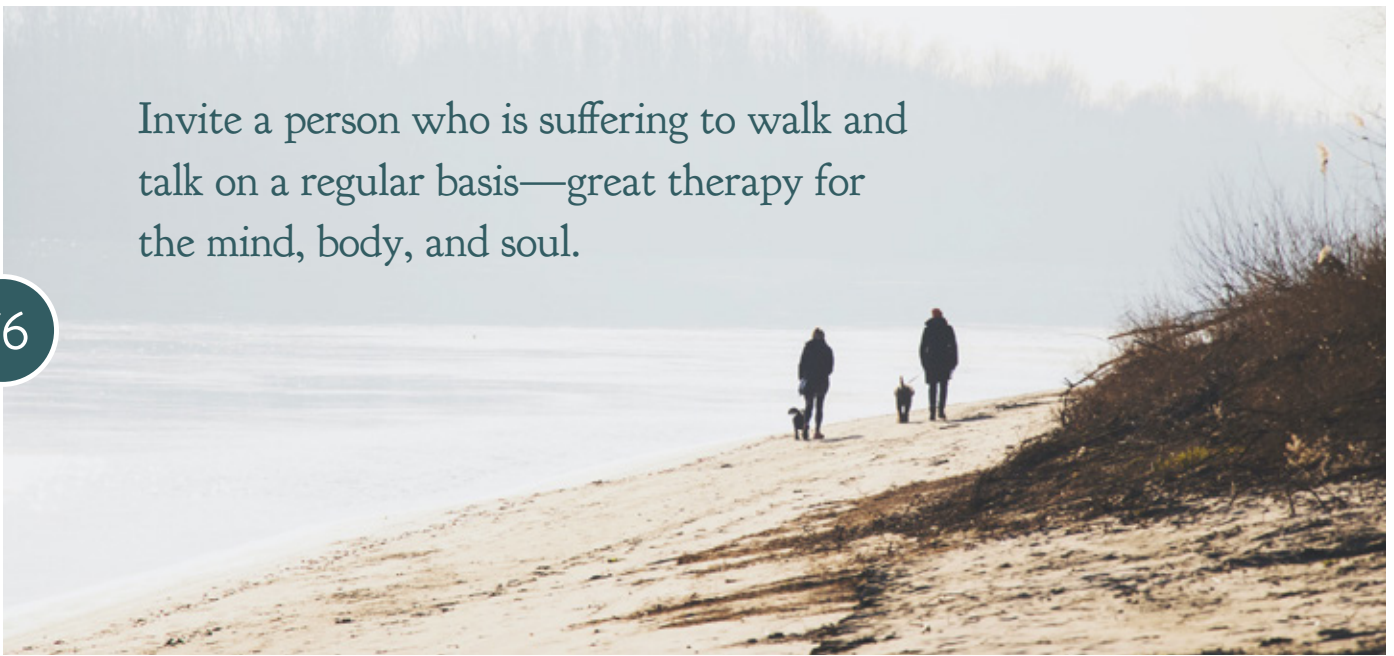
75

They're lonely. Extend an invitation to your house for lunch or dinner or coffee regularly. The companionship, not gourmet food, is what matters most.



Invite a person who is suffering to walk and talk on a regular basis—great therapy for the mind, body, and soul.

76



- 77 Surprise someone with a one-month **membership to an athletic club** to help them de-stress and “get out.” This gift becomes even more special if you join them.
- 78 Buy **tickets in advance to a play, symphony, or sporting event** that you can enjoy together.
- 79 When a friend is too weak to walk but still enjoys getting out, take them for **walks, to lunch, and shopping via a wheelchair.**

80

Giving gift cards is a wonderful way to get people out to have a mini-vacation from suffering. Some suggestions include cards to: movies, dinners, sporting events, bowling certificates, museums.



81

The loneliest day of the week for those who are alone is Sunday. So offer to meet the person at church or offer to pick him or her up.



# Special Spirit Lifters

- 82 If she is very ill and in pain, offer a **foot massage**. You don't have to know how. Just start massaging. One caregiver said that she imagined waves of quiet, soothing peace flowing throughout her body.
- 83 Type **favorite Bible verses** in large print and post one verse in each room of their home. Then when they walk into a room, they have something positive to read and think about. God's Word gives hope and courage. Ask for a list of favorite verses or use these favorites: [Proverbs 3:5](#), [Psalm 91:4](#), [Psalm 115:1](#), [Isaiah 41:10](#), [Isaiah 49:15-16](#), [Jeremiah 29:11-14](#).
- 84 There is a rich variety of perpetual **daily flip calendars** available. Pick the one that most appeals to you and to the person's situation. Some examples are: [Grace for the Moment](#), by Max Lucado and [Small Blessings Perpetual Calendar: Hope & Encouragement for Each Day](#).



85

## Join them for a meal.

When they are critically ill and confined to their home, it can light up their day when friends not only bring dinner, but also join them for dinner and conversation. (Go one step further and organize a dinner-guest schedule.)

If you have been with them during a difficult time, please, before parting, make a date to get together again. It offers them another planned time when they know someone will listen and care. It helps relieve the threat of desperation.

86



- 87 **Frequent visits** are treasured, but it is best to call before you visit to arrange the best time.
- 88 When visiting, **encourage your spouse to join you** to visit with their spouse.
- 89 Suggest **books, support groups, organizations and therapists** who can help with their problem. However, don't try to solve their problem for them, and don't be hurt if they don't take your advice. Just walk with them during this difficult time.
- 90 Offer to link them up with **someone you know and trust** who has gone through a similar crisis. That person may be able to answer some of their questions and concerns.



91

Watch a television program or a movie with them. This gives them the satisfaction of enjoying your company without the responsibility of entertaining you.

Children are so refreshing,  
honest, and real.

Encourage your children to care for others by suggesting that they draw a picture, write a poem, learn a song, make up a skit, buy a little gift, and so on. Here is an example: “When my eight-year-old son died, one of his friends came to my door with a present. It was a picture of a horse. I don’t know why he chose that picture, but it must have been very special to him, and for twelve years it has been special to me. It still is displayed in my guest bedroom.”

92



**93 Hug them often.** They need the physical touch as well as the affirmation!

**94** They need to laugh. There is such healing in laughter. So, tell them a joke or tell them about **something funny** that happened to you, or bring them a funny cartoon from the newspaper.

**95** Think of ways to **make them smile**. “My friend Pat hired a clown to come to the hospital with bright colorful helium balloons. Half of them had ‘Amy’ on them. The other half said, ‘I love you.’ Those joyous balloons were a wonderful, blatant denial of the automatic doom and gloom associated with the diagnosis of cancer. They added a welcome contrast to the sterility of the hospital decor. I tied the balloons to the night stand where they could blow in the vent, a bright streamer of color.” –Amy Harwell, *[When Your Friend Gets Cancer](#)*

Smile and maybe even laugh together by watching one of the following YouTube videos:

96

- Michael Jr.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twSvd5bQLDw>
- Jeff Foxworthy: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbXkP\\_GZjsE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbXkP_GZjsE)
- Jim Galligan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OI743NOJ7mc>

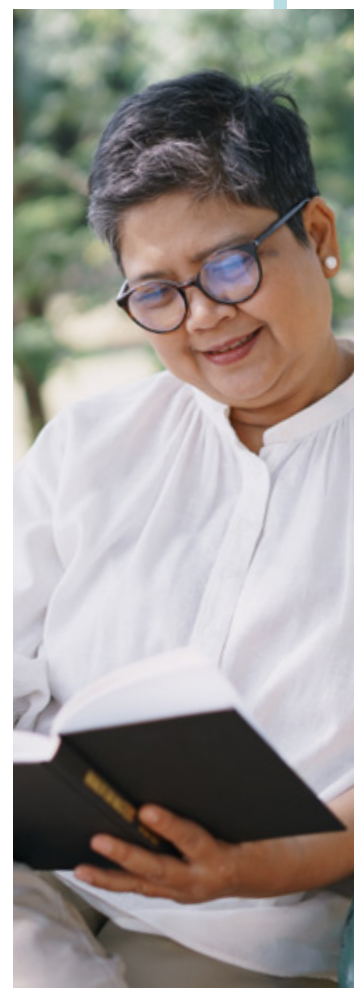
Or one of your favorite comedians.

97 Give them a **humorous book** to jog their innards. Someone has said that one hundred good belly laughs are the cardiovascular equivalent of ten minutes of rowing. Ask a librarian or the manager of your local bookstore for suggestions. Some of our suggestions are:

- Garrison Keillor's [\*Pretty Good Joke Book, 6th Edition\*](#)
- Patrick McManus's books: [\*Never Sniff a Gift Fish\*](#) and [\*The Grasshopper Trap\*](#) (especially for hikers/hunters/outdoors people)
- Any book by [\*Jim Unger\*](#) or [\*Erma Bombeck\*](#)
- Cartoon books such as [\*Calvin and Hobbes\*](#) or [\*Dilbert\*](#)

98 Bring them an **inspiring book or gift**. Consider what books have been helpful to you during a crisis or in everyday living. Three great possibilities are:

- A set of inspirational Scripture verse cards with an attractive wooden holder such as Buhbay's [\*"A Year of Peace & Comfort Scripture" cards\*](#)
- The [\*Chicken Soup for the Soul\*](#) book series
- A subscription to Guideposts magazine: [www.guideposts.org](http://www.guideposts.org)



Send them one note a week or call them once a week for a couple of months. It's the friends who keep visiting, calling, and sending notes who give hope for the future and the courage to work toward it.

99

- 100 If you have been with them during a crisis, follow up your visit with a **note of reassurance** that you value them (especially when they have shared very angry, hurtful, painful things).
- 101 Send them a YouTube clip of a **song** that has been especially soothing or inspiring to you.
- 102 Suggest doing something new with them like having a **facial or a massage**, going to a **hockey game** or taking an **aerobic dance class**.



- 103 Allow them to feel sad.** One of the most difficult problems of serious illness is that everyone wants to encourage the patient. However, sometimes having a good cry with a friend allows the tension to escape. You encourage them by letting them talk about their feelings.
- 104 Encourage them to call you** when they feel sad or lonely or ready to give up. By the time they finish dialing your number and hear you say, “Hello,” their fear might dissipate.
- 105** If their family lives far away and they need their emotional support, give them a generous **gift certificate** to help pay their phone bill for six months. Or give them a **prepaid cell phone**. What a thoughtful gift.



106

Read their favorite Psalm to them or read your favorite Psalm to them.

Give them a list of people to pray for. Praying for others does not take the pain away, but it does change their attitude toward it. By reminding them that others are also suffering, they may better tolerate their situation.

- 108** They may not remember what words people said during the first weeks after the death of their loved one, but they will remember you holding their hand, patting a shoulder, and hugging them. Never underestimate the power of a **touch**.
- 109** **Call daily** to check on them, especially during a particularly hard time.
- 110** Offer to call their church to request **prayers and/or visitation**.
- 111** Suggest working on a **service project** in the community. Problems minimize for people when they concentrate on another person's need, and they may find reaching out to help someone else energizing.

Offer to start a Bible or book study group in their home.

(An added touch would be if various members took turns coming early to tidy up the house and to make coffee.)

112



- 113 Invite them to participate in **projects** that can be done at home (stuffing envelopes, folding programs, cutting/gluing projects) for churches, schools and charitable organizations.
- 114 **Be the kind of caregiver who visits, calls, or sends a note or flowers each year on the date when their loved one died.** What a loving gift to know that someone else remembers too!
- 115 Ask them what **food they crave** today. One day it might be pizza and another day a turtle sundae. (As an added bonus, stay and eat with them.)
- 116 Say, **“I love you, I care.”**
- 117 Ask, **“What’s going to be the hard part for you?”** Brian Mansfield says, “this question bypasses all the small talk and gives the person the opportunity to express what concerns them most about their illness.”

Invite the person to participate in a “2 to 1 Ritual.”

Every time you talk or text, each of you shares 2 highs and 1 low for the day or the week. This helps both of you look for highs or blessings and yet also acknowledge the struggles and disappointments.

118

Give her the gift of hope. That gift might be tulip or daffodil bulbs planted for her with the hope that she will enjoy them when they blossom in the spring.

119



120 Suggest [www.365promises.com](http://www.365promises.com) for another **gift of hope**.

121 Remember that children grieve, too. Encourage them to think of **ways they can remember** their friend or relative. Ideas include: drawing a picture, writing a story or poem, making a memory book and planting a flower or tree.

122 To help a child learn to cope with grief, consider purchasing one of the following **books** by Marge Heegaard:

- [\*When Someone Very Special Dies\*](#)
- [\*When a Family is in Trouble\*](#)
- [\*When Mom & Dad Separate\*](#)
- [\*When Someone Has a Very Serious Illness\*](#)

“Caring for those who are suffering means always asking about the crisis, not avoiding it. The crisis is the most important thing in their lives. Normally, they will want to talk about it and perhaps cry about it. Offer them an opportunity to do both in the presence of someone who loves them. If the person does not want to talk about the crisis, he will let you know.” –Dr. James Cook

123

## wisdom OF THE wounded

Wisdom of the Wounded is a ministry that inspires and equips others to care for family and friends during life's difficulties via digital resources, educational workshops and keynote speaking on caregiving topics.