


HOLIDAY SUPPORT FOR A LOVED ONE





Holidays and social gatherings mark a time when families and friends come together and appreciate one another.

For widows, these very occasions can be a challenging reminder of what they have lost.

At these times, it's especially critical to support your loved one as she navigates a difficult time.



**"Rise up; this matter is in your hands.
We will support you, so take
courage and do it".**


Ezra 10:4

SUPPORT COUNTS



While holidays normally mark joyful occasions, widows, however, might see holidays as dreaded events. Whenever a holiday is approaching, images fill social media, television, and print ads of families coming together to celebrate. It's common, when you have lost a spouse, to feel left out when seeing images of happy families. When your life partner is no longer with you, the reminders produce feelings of anger, sadness, and confusion.

Regardless of whether a woman is newly widowed or lost their spouse years ago, these days are rife with complicated and difficult emotions. They can be seen as just another reminder of being alone. To escape this holiday bombardment, widows may avoid family and friends and go into isolation. This isolation magnifies the feelings of grief and loneliness that are already rampant during the holidays.



It's vital for you to show your support and love to widows during the holidays, to help them create new holiday memories with them and honor the ones of their lost love. It's important for widows to have a supportive network of family and friends they can rely on during this time.

However, it can be difficult to know what to say, or what to do. Nobody wants to inadvertently say or do the 'wrong' thing, but don't let that make you shy away from the topical together. The sights and sounds of the holiday season can trigger bittersweet memories, so show a widow in your life that you are there for her, and hopefully soon you'll be more confident on how to do that.

"Being a widow is like folding a fitted sheet, no one really knows how".

WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

The first rule of thumb when considering what to say is not to ignore the fact that this could be a hard day or pretend that it isn't happening.

Don't presume that 'enough time has 'gone by' or that you don't want to broach a difficult topic. Whether the husband's death happened recently or years ago, widows sometimes need to share memories of their loved ones or feelings about their loss.

No matter the words you choose to use, understand that you don't have to always have all of the answers, but you are committed to supporting her and if necessary, finding those who do have the answers.





SHARE

Share a holiday story about her spouse. Don't be afraid to use his name too. Too many people are uncomfortable speaking the deceased's name but it will mean so much to her. Talking about loss and grief can be difficult, but it's an essential part of the healing process.

ENCOURAGE

Encourage her to share her feelings and fears or holiday stories with you. As you listen, make sure to cultivate a mindset of empathy and imagine what your life would be like if you lost your spouse.

PLAN

Talk to her about ideas you have for the holidays. Ask what would be helpful, and what wouldn't be helpful before making plans, both to be sure their appropriate, and to give everyone something to look forward to. This could also relieve some anxiety about how she will navigate the day.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?



Perhaps she would prefer not to address a holiday directly but would rather not be alone. It's important for you to find these things out in advance so you may mark the occasion appropriately.

The family pot-luck supper is too much for her? Then offer to take her out to lunch or dinner instead. If circumstances prevent you from being together, look for a way to let her know that you are thinking of her.

Keep in mind that too many decisions may be difficult for her at this point in time.

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**GIVING COMES
IN MANY
FORMS**



"If nature has made you for a giver, your hands are born open, and so is your heart; and though there may be times when your hands are empty, your heart is always full..."

Frances Hodgson Burnett

A teal alarm clock with a white face and black numbers is shown in the bottom right corner. The clock has two bells on top and is set against a light blue background.

GIVE OF YOUR TIME

A HUG

Offer a hug. The power of the human touch is very strong. When her spouse is no longer there, she may not receive hugs like she used to.

Hugging is a wonderful way to connect to another human being. Plus, hugging is free so freely give them!



A GIFT

Give a thoughtful gift. Remember when you used to get those conversation hearts with the silly messages and how great it made you feel.

A BREATHER

Help with the children—two legs and/or four legged. If she is raising their children by herself, she probably could use a break. Offer to take the kids for an afternoon or evening.

If she has pets, maybe you could take them while she travels or even walk them a few times.

A BRAINSTORM

If she is open to it, brainstorm ways to honor her spouse during the holidays—should it be a more somber occasion, or would she prefer a celebration of his life?



KIND GESTURES

SEND A CARD

Everyone likes getting a card, either store-bought or homemade. Add a message about how special she is to you, or share a memory, thoughtful compliment, or anything else that might bring her a smile.

GIVE SWEETS

Send along some sweet and savory treats, or if they can make the trip, a batch of home-made cookies.

Add a note sharing a heartfelt family memory or a silly story from your daily life.



FUND A WISH

Have you ever heard her say, “Gee, I wish I had ...” about a certain activity? Or a trip to a bucket-list destination? Or a home-based project that makes it a more exciting place to take shelter when needed? Maybe a garden? Or a craft room?

CHART A COURSE

Whether or not your loved one freely discusses finances with you, if you think she’d appreciate it, set her up with that certain CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER®. Then, call to prepay for an appointment.



MAY WE SUGGEST...



Rise Up: A Widow's Journal

captures the thoughts and feelings that might be swirling around in the head and heart of a widow. It is thoughtfully organized into 10 chapters that guide along various stages of widowhood starting with finding oneself suddenly single to moving forward and being able to live again.

Each chapter is beautifully illustrated and begins with five questions or thoughts to ponder followed by 20 quotes to prompt journaled thoughts. It contains important topics to think about from faith, love, wisdom, gratitude, as well as, money. It can be followed as laid out or write through a specific period of this journey.

Available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

JOIN THE RISE UP COMMUNITY



Join our 'Rise Up' community to connect with an encouraging group of women who support each other through life's transitions.



When you are ready, WH Cornerstone Investments is here to help.

We're passionate about empowering widows with their financial future. Our advisory services pave the way for rebuilding the financial (and personal) lives of those going through a season of loss.

Learn more at
www.whcornerstone.com.