

100 Ways to Be a Heartworker

**When Illness or Grief
affects someone you know,
here is a list of 100 simple ways
to open your heart and
give to someone who is hurting.**

Slow down.

Look inward.

Be Intentional.

Give from your own life experience.

And pay attention to what unfolds...

1-PRAY

Pray for the family or person all day long while you are at work, running errands, or at home.

Organize prayer circles at your church or home.

Instructions: Send out a group text or email inviting friends over to your house. Have a candle lit before everyone gets there (to set the mood) and invite everyone to sit together in a room. Go around the room and allow everyone to say their own prayers out loud or choose common prayers everyone knows and say them out loud together over and over again. For family and friends who are not close by you can send out a group text or email with the date and time and ask them to stop what they are doing at the time of the prayer circle, light a candle, and sit in prayer. Before everyone leaves, remind them to keep praying.

Another way to bring people together remotely is to pick a day and time to pray and ask everyone to pray for the person all at the same time. You can let the person you are praying for know this so they can feel the power of it. Remind people that you can be at a soccer game or in a store and still pray!

2-TAKE-OVER-CARPOOLING-RESPONSIBILITIES

If a family on your kid's team or activity is dealing with a grief or a health challenge, offer to do the driving for their child to and from practice. Ask other parents to rotate this duty with you or do it yourself. Think about what the kids need (a snack? Water bottle?) and provide these things. This makes one less thing the family will need to organize.

3-TELL-THEM-WHAT-YOU-CAN-DO

In emergent situations, thinking of what kind of help to ask for can be overwhelming to the family, so offer something specific rather than asking what is needed. Here are some examples:

"I am going to grab Joey to drive him to and from practice for awhile, just have him ready by 5:00 and I will have snacks and water in the car for him"

"I can food shop this week or take the kids for a few hours, which feels most helpful?"

"I'm going early to the concert tonight and will save you seats on the left hand side towards the front. See you there!"

"I'm dropping off bagels tomorrow morning by 7:00 they will be on the porch. Enjoy! XOXO"

4-SEND-CARDS

It's awesome to get mail! The cards don't always have to be serious. Your first card can say something like "I know you have a bunch of serious stuff going on right now so I thought it may balance things out to get stupid, funny cards - so I'm on a mission to find the dumbest, funniest cards to send you!" Send a card once a week or organize with your group

of friends to do this. If you don't know what to write, just sign your name. Rally your friends to send the funniest, most inappropriate cards they can find on a regular basis.

5-SEND-TREATS

Send food items that can be out on the counter for everyone to grab when they want a snack. It never hurts to have new, fun snacks to eat! Heartworks loves Edible Arrangements, Cheryl's cookies, and The Popcorn Factory.

6-SEND-DROP-OFF-WEEKLY-LOVE

Organize your friends to send something fun each week to the person who's sick or grieving. It can provide a welcome distraction for kids and adults to have a little surprise to look forward to each week.

7-GIVE-KIDS-A-PROJECT-TO-DO

Send kids a project so that they can make something for the person who is sick or sad. Stick to things kids can do on their own and that don't need a lot of instruction.

Here are a few example ideas:

A bracelet making kit to design "healing bracelets" for everyone in the family or for people who come over to visit.

A painting set to make a picture to put in the person's room.

Drop off cookie dough or baking supplies and a recipe. You can add an apron and other cute baking utensils.

8-DECORATE-THEIR-FRONT-LAWN-WITH-LOVE

Get together and decorate the front lawn or garage door with balloons and/or posters. Get the word out for everyone to get a balloon or make a poster and decorate the yard over the course of a day. This could be for the family to see when they get home from the hospital, a funeral service, a trip, or just on a gloomy Tuesday at home. Stay away from "Get Well Soon" balloons and just keep everything joyful and fun. This idea came to us when sweet Connor Crooks was 3 years old and in his final days with a brain tumor. We covered his lawn in balloons so that when he and his twin sister Claire looked out the front window all they saw was love. This was a way to show our love without having to bother them during such a sacred time.

9-MAKE-A-FAIRY-OR-ANGEL-GARDEN

These are awesome for kids! Choose angels or fairies, depending on what is more meaningful for you or the person to whom you are giving it. You can get tons of supplies for this at any craft store. Make it alone or have friends over for a Fairy Garden making night. The concept is that angels or fairies are all around us and the garden is a place for them to hang out.

10-PERSONALIZE-THINGS-WITH-PICTURES

Decorate a pillowcase or T-shirts with pictures for people to wear during treatments. Have all your high school or college

friends frame favorite old pictures and mail them. It will create a room decorated with pictures that will hopefully bring some laughs. This can also be done with lights hung around the room and every new picture gets clipped to the lights.

11-ORGANIZE-A-MEAL-TRAIN-FOR-DINNERS

We use Lotsahelpinghands.com because it is easy and sends out reminders. Remember to ask about any allergies, dislikes, and what time the family likes to eat dinner. Dinners can be left in a cooler on the porch so no one has to answer the door if they don't feel like it.

Tips:

- Leave a cooler outside the house with a thank you note from the family (Thank you's are not necessary AT ALL but this takes the weight off the family feeling like they haven't thanked everyone)
- Encourage everyone to add a note to their meal - add pretty paper products so that no dishes need to be done
- Deliver in disposable containers so the family doesn't have the hassle of getting dishes back to you. If delivering on plates you need back, write a note to leave dirty dishes outside the door and swing by the next day to get them.

12-DON'T-FORGET-ABOUT-BREAKFAST-AND-LUNCH

Send a text to the family the night before saying "I'm dropping breakfast off at 6:30 tomorrow morning! It will be in the cooler."

Ideas:

- Include paper products
- Bagels and cream cheese
- Doughnuts
- Banana bread
- Muffins
- Casseroles/ quiches
- OJ / coffee
- Fruit
- Lunch from a favorite place in town

13-DROP-OFF-SOMETHING-IN-THE-MORNING

Sometimes the mornings seem impossible to wake up to when someone is sad or sick (or both). Drop off a favorite coffee or drink every time you go for yourself. Send a text saying "Hope your day is feeling manageable, I thought your favorite Passionfruit Iced Tea might help, it's on your doorstep." Or text on your way over and say something like "I'm on my way over with a tea for you, do you want some company or should I leave it at the door?" When I lived at my sister's house in the weeks following September 11th a neighbor we barely knew started to drop off two coffees on the doorstep every morning. Then he got word that I drank Diet Coke, not coffee, so then every morning there was a coffee and Diet Coke on the doorstep. We started off our day feeling cared for and witnessed by someone.

14-BINGE-WATCH

Make a plan to have a Binge Watch Day together. Show up in your PJs (and maybe bring a new pair for them) and pick an awesome TV series. Bring snacks and bunker down for the day. Try to limit your cell phone use so you are able to really be present for the visit. Check before you go over about anything they have been craving or can't have (a lot of times chemotherapy affects what people feel like eating).

15-OFFER-PLAY-DATES-TO-KIDS-AND-SIB-LINGS

Offer to take kids out of the house for a bit and make the day especially fun! Tell them about it a few days in advance so they have something to look forward to and distract their minds with. It makes the adults happy that when they are too sick or sad to do fun things that their kids are out doing something fun. This is a HUGE gift.

16-MAKE-THEM-A-FUN-AND-ERRANDS-BOX

Fill a beautiful box with cash (\$1, \$5 and \$20 bills) collected by your friends, neighbors, class, or team. It's called a "Fun and Errand Box" and it provides extra money for kids to grab when they are going out or if someone is going to the store. It saves a trip to the ATM and just may make one thing easier.

17-DROP-OFF-GOOD-BOOKS

Books are a good resource and effective distraction. You could put together a basket including a spiritual book, an inspiring book, a funny book, and a novel so they can choose one depending on their mood (you could write a note explaining this).

18-SEND-A-PRAYER-BLANKET

A prayer blanket is a pretty, comfy blanket that everyone in your family, on your team, etc., takes turns holding and prays into. Include a note with everyone's signatures that says something like "This blanket was prayed into by our whole book club, we hope that you feel covered with love and prayers."

19-PLAN-A-BACKYARD-PICNIC

If they are too sick to be out in public and have been stuck in the house, this gives a change of scenery and a reason to be outside. Remember a colorful blanket, flowers for a centerpiece, and pretty paper products! If kids are involved, bring bubbles, Frisbees etc., to occupy them. Picnics also keep everyone outside the house so there's no pressure on the family to clean anything before you get there!

20-TAKE-CARE-OF-SOME-ERRANDS

Offer to do errands for them or invite them out to do errands for you. The text can say "I'm running errands all over town tomorrow, would love to see you and we can get yours done too." Sometimes just driving around is a good activity because all they have to do is sit in the car. You can listen to music, catch up on things, and get out of the house. When Megan's friend Mary was sick they loved to go to Home

Goods and walk around on a day she felt good and then they would stop by the dry cleaners and grocery store. Sometimes she got out of the car and sometimes Megan just ran into the store for her.

21-OUR-TOWN-LOVES-YOU-BASKET

Do a gift card collection of shops and restaurants around your town. This offers a direction for people to get out of the house if they can. They can also use the cards to order dinner in at the end of a long day. Include menus and/or business cards for easy access. Besides restaurants you can add gift cards to:

- A car wash
- The movies
- The bowling alley
- Nail/hair salon
- Spa
- Grocery store
- Coffee place
- Add a note that says "the town is full of love for your family."

22-OPEN-AN-ACCOUNT-AT-A-RESTAURANT

Collect money and open an account at a restaurant in town. This way the family knows all they have to do is call in an order and have food delivered. Give the restaurant the heads up about what the family is going through so that they have the chance to be extra flexible, sensitive and loving with the deliveries. You can also add a pretty envelope filled with dollar bills so the family isn't scrambling for money to tip the delivery person.

23-NEW-PAJAMAS-ROBE-OR-YOGA-PANTS

Choose something that is soft and beautiful! Buttons down the front are usually safest for ports and so that they don't have to lift their arms over their heads to put them on. Sometimes people don't want to be in PJs all day and when this is the case we love to give them new Lulu Lemon yoga pants (or another favorite brand) and some loose-fitting tops.

24-SEND-THEM-COMFORT

The "Better Sweater Fleece" from Patagonia, for example, comes in all different colors and is a perfect "go-to fleece" for around the house or the hospital. A full zipper in the front may be the best option for someone in treatment.

25-WRITE-A-THANK-YOU-NOTE-INSTEAD-OF-A-SYMPATHY-CARD

After Megan's dad went home to God, her sister got a thank you note from a college roommate thanking her for all the good things their dad had done. A thank you note is easier to digest than a sympathy card.

"Dear Jennifer, Thank you for sharing your father with me. He helped me in so many ways when I was struggling at school (list how the person helped you)"

When Megan's friend Mo's dad went home to God, Megan sent her a St. Patrick's Day card instead of a sympathy card - it felt like a lighter and more appropriate way to celebrate the life of Chuck Dolan!

26-SEND-DAILY-OR-WEEKLY-TEXTS

In terms of texts, try to make statements instead of questions so the person doesn't feel pressure to respond back - you can use your own words or send a daily/weekly quote:

"I'm with you in my mind and heart today."

"Sending you love."

"You are not alone. I'm right here."

"Praying that today is as gentle as possible for you."

"You can do this."

And never ever underestimate a classic...

"I love you." ... This one covers all the bases.

For the most part, it is unnecessary to mention why you are sending the text. They know they are going to the hospital, etc., so you don't have to say "I'm thinking about you while you are at the hospital today." Just leave that part out so they don't have to see the word "hospital" a hundred times in texts that day.

27-HELP-THEM-TO-HAVE-FRIENDS-OVER

Give a gift card to kids, teens, and young adults to have their friends over for a pizza party, movie party, or some other theme. You can drop off paper products and drinks with a gift card to have food delivered from their favorite place. It gives kids something to look forward to gives them a focus other than the illness or sadness.

28-DAIRY-DELIVERY

Find a local company that delivers dairy products. After 9/11, Megan's niece's soccer team pitched in and had milk, eggs, yogurt, butter and cream cheese delivered for a year. The family was never out of the basics and this was a huge help.

29-GIVE-THEM-NEW-ELECTRONICS-2

A new Apple Watch, an iPad or laptop is an awesome gift for someone in the hospital or who is bed ridden. It makes the time go quicker, helps distract their mind, and helps them stay in touch with people. If a book club or team chips in, it's totally affordable for everyone.

30-HIRE-A-CLEANING-SERVICE

Hiring a cleaning service for the length of time someone is in treatment can be a HUGE help. You can reach out to your friend group or work group and everyone can pitch in whatever amount they want or "cover a cleaning day" by paying the full amount for one cleaning session. This is a great gift to offer anyone sick or grieving. Use a service that someone in the group trusts instead of a random cleaning service and explain the situation to them so they are sensitive about schedule changes and possible cancellations.

31-GIVE-THEIR-FAVORITE-BOOZE-AND-CHOCOLATE

Sometimes chocolate and wine is the only thing that helps other than God. You can include a note that states this fact.

32-DROP-OF-A-DATE-NIGHT-BASKET

The basket can include:

- Appetizers to have at home and a nice bottle of wine or Perrier
- Gift card for dinner delivery
- Movie tickets
- Gift card for local ice cream shop

33-ORGANIZE-PIZZA-FRIDAYS

Pizza Fridays are usually a huge hit. Get people to sign up to bring pizza, or have it delivered, every Friday night. You can add salad, beverages, dessert, and of course, paper products! Kids really look forward to Pizza Friday.

34-DROP-OFF-PAPER-GOODS

There may be a lot of people coming through the house and paper products need to keep up! Megan remembers vividly, the week after 9/11, one of her sister's neighbors coming up the driveway with a red wagon filled with:

- toilet paper
- tissues
- paper towels
- paper plates
- pretty colored solo cups
- pretty napkins
- sturdy plastic silverware

It was a thoughtful and practical gift.

35-TAKE-CARE-OF-THE-BILL

If you hear the family is going out to dinner, call the restaurant and pay the bill anonymously. The day after Megan's father's services she was out to lunch with her siblings and mom on an outside patio in town. Someone drove by and saw them and paid the bill. Although it was unnecessary, it made them feel very loved.

36-GIVE-THEM-A-WEEKEND-AWAY

Send them away for a night or a weekend away. You can give the adult in the family a gift card to a specific place with a note that says "When the time feels right, we would love you to have a weekend away." It might be best to let the adult tell the kids (after a date is chosen) so the kids aren't asking to go when the rest of the family isn't ready or able.

37-GIVE-A-MANI-PEDI

Give a bag of gift cards for manicures/pedicures and massages, this way it "gently forces" people to take care of themselves. These can also be used by caretakers. The note included can read "These are to use, share or give away."

38-HOLD-SEATS-FOR-THEM

Have seats held for the family at school activities and sporting events. Organize ahead of time with churches, schools, and teams so the family can get to events last minute and still have good seats.

39-GET-THEIR-CAR-CLEANED

Ask if you can borrow their car for a few hours and then have it detailed and fill it up with gas. A clean car always feels good!

40-COVER-TRAVEL-EXPENSES

If they need to travel into a city for treatments get them an EZ pass account that is pre-paid and gift cards for gas and some cash or coins for parking. Remember to wrap it up nice so it feels like a gift!

41-TRAVEL-TREATMENT-BAGS

If the family is going to be spending time in the car and have kids, make little goodie bags each week filled with activities, things to read, and snacks for the car or hospital.

42-GIVE-INSPIRING-JEWELRY

A group of friends each sending Alex and Ani bracelets is a meaningful gift that the person can feel and see on their wrists. Cross necklaces, charm bracelets, and zodiac sign jewelry are all powerful. When my Dad went home to God, my sisters and I bought zodiac sign necklaces with his sign and our signs on them. We still wear them 12 years later. When we send zodiac necklaces to families, they usually turn into one of their most sacred items. We give cuff links or key chains to men.

43-GET-CREATIVE-WITH-OLD-PICTURES

Have your friends or family go through old pictures and make a mug, pillow case, or blanket out of them. It will remind the person how strong the roots of friendship and family are.

44-SEND-LOVE-TO-THE-DOG-OR-CAT

If the family has a dog or cat, you can send Bark Box/Meow Box to them every month. People love getting treats for their pets! It is an especially huge hit with kids that are going through a rough time.

45-CARE-PACKAGES-FOR-COLLEGE-STUDENTS

Send them care packages to college-aged kids or young adults who live out of the house. When a dear Heartworks friend returned to God after a 14-year journey with breast cancer, we each took turns sending weekly care packages to her daughter who was a senior in college. It helped her daughter and all of us through the first three months of our grief.

46-TAKE-CARE-OF-CARETAKERS

If the family has people staying with them to help, or you are not one of the central helpers, do something for the caretakers to make it easier for them to be with the family. In the final days of helping a dear friend, other friends sneaked in my house and folded all the laundry that was piled up in my basement and left me wine and cheese and crackers. This was their way to help me help our friend.

47-GET-THE-SMALL-STUFF-TAKEN-CARE-OF

When you are living with grief or illness, the small stuff can often turn into "big stuff." By "small stuff", I mean if your kid is going to the same birthday party as your friend's kid, then buy and wrap a gift for them to bring. Cover teacher's gifts and end of the year gifts. This isn't necessarily a financial gift, it is a gift of convenience. A few years ago, when my God son had a tumor in his brain, we wrapped up bottles of wine in Christmas bags with tags attached in case my friend decided she was up to go to a Christmas party, then she would have hostess gifts ready to go.

48-PUT-MONEY-INTO-A-SCHOOL-LUNCH-ACCOUNT

Add money to the school lunch accounts for the kids. This way, if lunch doesn't get made on any certain day the kids can easily buy lunch and the parents don't have to dig around for \$2.75 (finding exact change can be maddening!)

49-ORGANIZE-THINGS-KIDS-NEED-FOR-SCHOOL

If the chorus concert at school requires a white shirt and black pants, offer to get this taken care of so they don't have to think about it. Yellow T-shirt needed for field day? Send one into the teacher and send a text to the mom saying it's covered. Cupcakes needed for Halloween party? Bake them and send them in on behalf of the mom too sick or sad to bake. Two days before my brother in law's funeral mass a friend of my sister's showed up with seven blue blazers in all different sizes so my nephews had blazers that fit them. When an unexpected event happens, like a funeral, the kids may not have dress clothes that fit, so look into this and, if needed, go shopping.

50-ROOM-MAKOVER

A room makeover is a great thing to do if the person is open to it. Our friend Mary LOVED to sit by her fireplace but the chair didn't face the fire so she was always moving it. She was going to be spending a lot of time at home during her treatments, so we brought in a decorator friend who found a beautiful swivel chair that worked perfectly, redid her mantle, and freshened up the room.

51-CHOOSE-A-SYMBOL-OF-SUPPORT-FOR-THEM

Share this symbol with the people who love them. When our friend Barbara was in treatment, her family turned a "B" for Boston Strong into "B" for Barbara Strong and handed out "B" baseball hats for everyone to wear. Our friend Sage's

family handed out swallow bird pins to everyone to wear in support of Sage. If your friend is into Jesus, then choose a cross or rosary beads that can be shared with everyone.

52-HOST-A-PARTY-AT-HEARTWORKS

We host "Possible Parties," which are necessary celebrations during impossible times. Maybe a child who recently lost a parent needs a birthday party, or maybe a friend going through treatment would enjoy a girl's night. A possible party can be a much-needed and enjoyable treat for someone.

53-PLAN-A-GAME-NIGHT

Drop off board games and dinner or snacks for a fun night that can keep kids entertained or even the whole family. For a personal touch, you can order playing cards online made with their pet's picture on it!

54-SHOVEL-PLOW-RAKE-AND-MOW

Shovel their walkways in winter and have someone with a plow clear the driveway. Rake their leaves in the fall. Mow their lawn in summer. That first year after September 11th all these things were done for my sister and they were a Godsend. Whatever upkeep you are doing for your own house during any particular season, see if you can set it up for them as well.

55-POT-A-PLANT-AND-ADD-NOTES

Buy or pot a flower or plant and have everyone who loves them attach notes either on spikes or with ribbons.

56-HAVE-AN-EASTER-EGG-HUNT

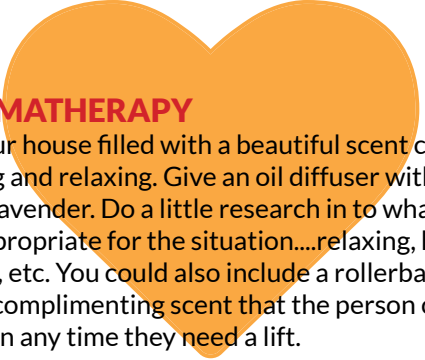
When it's hard for a family to be in the mood for holidays, offer activities to make the parents feel like the kids are still having fun celebrating. If a mom is too sick to bring a child to an egg hunt, have one in your yard and invite her kids and all their friends. Or drop off pre-filled plastic eggs in a basket at their house and a caretaker can have the hunt when the time seems right.

57-HOUSEKEEPING

In times of grief and especially in times of illness, cleaning the house can seem overwhelming. Chip in with friends and hire a housekeeping service to help out the family.

58-ADD-A-GIFT-CARD-TO-AN-OUTING

When my family takes a trip, my mom comes over and gives each of my girls a rolled up \$10.00 bill. It's always fun to have your own spending money. If you hear that anyone in the family is going to a theme park, sporting event, movies, a play, etc., drop of a gift card or cash for snacks, souvenirs, and extra fun. It's just an extra way to show some love in a card that simply says, "This is to help add to your fun at the play tonight!"



59-AROMATHERAPY

Having your house filled with a beautiful scent can be comforting and relaxing. Give an oil diffuser with a relaxing scent like lavender. Do a little research in to what scents may be appropriate for the situation....relaxing, healing, energizing, etc. You could also include a rollerball of the same or a complimenting scent that the person could apply to their skin any time they need a lift.

60-NEW-OUTFITS-HELP

Whatever your friend likes to do - yoga, bike riding, hiking, golf - get her a new outfit for that activity or just a new outfit to wear around. It may seem small and silly in the midst of a serious situation, but it feels good and she's certainly not shopping for herself right now.

61-HIRE-A-HANDYMAN-FOR-A-DAY

Or send over one of your friends who is handy to fix the little things being neglected in the house. A broken drawer on a good day is no big deal, but a broken drawer, burned out light bulb, or loose table leg can be maddening after spending a day, week, or month at the hospital.

62-BESTIE-PJS-FOR-YOU-BOTH-TO-WEAR

The morning I left for a trip during a particularly painful time in my life, my sister gave me matching pajamas so that every night we would be wearing the same ones. It comforted me and helped us feel connected across the time zones.

Add a note explaining that although you can't be together, you are wearing the same jammies at night. This is a great thing to do with a bestie, sibling, or group of friends. What's better than all your sorority friends, spread all over the country, wearing the same jammies to bed each night?! This can also be done with other "matching" items:

- perfume (How about "Baby Soft" from 6th grade or your favorite Este Lauder you shared in college, or your new grown-up favorite!)
- Matching shoe laces to work out in
- Jewelry (remember how it felt to wear half a heart and your bestie had the other half?!)
- winter hats (Loveyourmelon.com is great)
- mittens
- t-shirts
- socks

63-KNIT-OR-CROCHET-AND-PRAY

If you are feeling disconnected and chomping at the bit to do something, learn to knit or crochet and pray with every stitch. This way, when you are done, it will be FILLED with prayers. Send a blanket, hats, mittens or scarves for the whole family. You can add a note saying, "I didn't know what else to do, so I knitted (or crocheted) for you. I prayed with every stitch and I hope you feel them when you wear it."

64-THINK-ONE-MEAL-AHEAD

If you are going to see someone from the family at a morning dance class or soccer game, bring them lunch to leave with and eat when they get home. When people are struggling with grief and illness so often they are operating one hour or event at a time. If you see them at your 6 am yoga class, bring coffee and bagels for them to bring home (you get the idea) and don't forget pretty paper plates and delicious cookies for dessert.

65-TREATS-FOR-AFTER-A-SHOW-GAME

School talent show/play/evening game? Drop off desserts at their house so they have something to look forward to when they get home. Parents may not feel like dealing with the crowds at Dairy Queen for the post-game celebration, so this way they can have people they are comfortable with over afterward instead of being in town with the masses.

66-KEEP-IT-SIMPLE-STUPID

So often we do nothing because we get overwhelmed trying to be creative. There is a saying in 12-step programs, "KISS", which means "Keep it Simple Stupid." So here are simple, small items you can drop off with great love:

- A chocolate bar/movie-sized box of candy
- A bottle of seltzer A cup of coffee/hot chocolate
- A box of doughnut holes
- A plate of fruit
- Homemade banana bread
- A six pack of seasonal beer

67-DO-THE-ESSENTIAL-SHOPPING

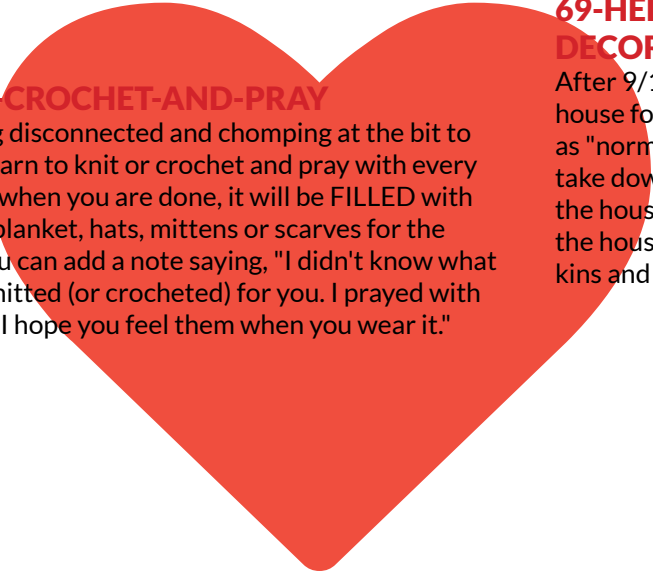
Send a quick text before you go to the food store or department store and ask what you can pick up for them. Sometimes it helps to say, "I'm going to Target. What can I grab for you?" rather than, "I'm going to Target. Do you need anything?"

68-DROP-OFF-LUNCH-AT-SCHOOL

If a parent or sibling is sick, this takes one thing off mom's plate and gives the kid something to look forward to. You can organize people to drop off lunches at school one day or several days a week so the parent knows lunch is taken care of.

69-HELP-PUT-UP-OR-TAKE-DOWN-HOLIDAY-DECORATIONS

After 9/11, it felt impossible for my sister to decorate her house for any of the holidays, but we wanted to keep things as "normal" as possible for her kids. Offer to help put up and take down decorations (inside and outside). If you pass by the house in December and the pumpkins are still outside the house, send a text saying, "I'm going to grab your pumpkins and replace with a wreath this afternoon."



70-FLY-OR-DRIVE-FOR-A-VISIT

Do not put off going to see people you love when they are struggling. If they are in a phase of the illness or grief that they are up for visit ... GO. Plan on staying in a hotel and being self-sufficient so it is no extra stress on them, but JUST GO. Make it a short trip and take care of everything while you are there that you can think of. A five-hour drive, just for lunch, is worth it during times like this.

71-FRAME-THEIR-FAVORITE-QUOTE

If you know of a motivational quote or phrase that they depend on, frame it for their room so that they can look at it every day.

72-GO-OLD-SCHOOL-AND-WRITE-LETTERS

It can be very comforting to see handwriting of people you love. Have high school friends write a note on loose leaf paper and fold it up and put in an envelope to mail. It will feel like you are passing notes in class! College friends, write letters like you used to do over the summers to each other. This will be a big hit.

73-OPEN-UP-SOME-WINDOWS

Sometimes we forget the power of some fresh air. They may need to be reminded to get some air flowing in the house.

74-CLEAN-OUT-THE-FRIDGE

While you are visiting, you could open up the refrigerator and give it a good wipe down! If they are open to you doing this, you could also ask if you could throw out anything that's expired and make a list so they know what they need new (so that they don't think they have mayo and then go to get some and it's gone) or just go to the store and replace the expired items. Look for easy things to do around the house and just tidy up. Make sure this seems to feel okay with them. Sometimes it can feel intrusive and they may want to kick you in the shin for moving stuff around. Use your judgment!

75-CHUCK-E-CHEESE

As moms we may hate it. But, to a kid, Chuck E. "Jesus" Cheese is about as good as it gets. This is the gift that keeps on giving. It gives the kids something to look forward to and few things would feel better for a mom than knowing their babes get to go there, but she doesn't have to go!! And they will be so exhausted when they get home that it may also offer a nice, mellow night.

76-MAKE-THEM-A-PLAYLIST

Everyone above a certain age knows the feeling of being in high school and having someone make you a mix tape. THE BEST. So, if someone has long drives in the car, or long waits in at the hospital, have all of your friends put together a playlist for them of favorite old songs. You can send them the link with everyone's song choices and little explanations about each.

Example: "Hi Colleen, We thought you could listen to this

playlist on your way to (work, hospital, airport, running errands, during chemo, etc.) when you need a boost of love!"

77-NEW-SHEETS

Few things feel better than lovely, new sheets on a bed! You could give them your favorite brand or go all-out and order from Boll and Branch, which is one of our favorite luxury sheet companies. This idea could go hand-in-hand with a decorated pillowcase (see #10).

78-ARRANGE-FOR-A-DOG-MOBILE-GROOMER

Fresh, clean dogs make people happy. You can find out how often they usually get their dog groomed and let them know that a groomer will be in their driveway around that time to save them an errand.

79-MAKE-LOVING-REMINDER-CARDS

Reminder Cards can be made out of index cards or card stock. They can be done by you, your family, or group of friends. They are reminders for when times are tough and can say things like: "You can do this!", "We love you!", "Be still and know that God is present!", "You are supported!", "One Day at a Time." These can be taped all over the house (on mirrors, windows, the fridge, the TV, etc.) as reminders of love and support.

80-RELIGIOUS-MEDALS-FOR-THE-CAR

When Megan's godchild Charlie was in treatment for a brain tumor, Megan sent her friend Amy a matching medal of one she got for her own car so that as they both drove around town, they were both looking at the same source of strength and love on their dashboard.

81-WEIGHTED-BLANKETS

Weighted blankets can be very comforting to adults and children experiencing anxiety or stress. The blanket is filled with weighted materials that simulate the pressure of a hug when you're covered by it. There are many online retailers of these blankets. Most will have a chart recommending the appropriate blanket weight for the person's size. Make sure to fill the blanket with your prayers, too. You can send a note saying, "I hope this blanket feels like a warm hug and that you also feel surrounded by all the prayers in it."

82-MATCHING-SPORTS-SHIRTS

If the person or family are super fans of a particular team, have everyone who loves them start posting pictures in team apparel. If it's during the sports season, have everyone's families watch the game at the same time they are watching the game, and send pics and text them throughout the game so it feels like you are all watching together.

83-WALK-THEIR-DOG

It would make anyone feel good knowing their dog is out having fun if they are too sick or sad to entertain their pet. Get on a regular schedule to take the pet out or just send a quick text, "Hi. I'm going to the park at 4:00pm. Would love to take Spot with me."

84-ADD-THEIR-NAMES-TO-PRAYER-LISTS

If they are active in a church and would be open to the idea, add them to the church prayer list so they will be prayed for every week. Let them know this so they can feel the power of the prayers.

85-PARTICIPATE-IN-A-RACE-FUNDRAISER

You can honor a person who is dealing with an illness by wearing a t-shirt with their name on it or taping their name somewhere on your bike. Raise money for the cause in their name. It will help them feel like they are doing something for the cause, even if they are lying in bed.

86-CONTINUE-A-TRADITION

At Megan's friend's school, there was a head master who read "T'was the Night Before Christmas" every year the day before Christmas break. When he was too sick to do so, the school created a video of students reading every line from the book and sent it to him.

87-GET-THEM-A-NEW-HAIR-DRYER

This one might sound weird, but it's an awesome idea. Really good, expensive hairdryers cut drying time in half and, even though you are focused on taking care of someone who's sick, you will just feel better if your hair looks decent. And it will save time! You could add new hair ties and a good brush to the package.

88-A-GIFT-CARD-FOR-A-KERATIN-TREATMENT

When someone's hair is the last thing they can focus on, this is a good gift! A keratin treatment is an anti-frizz treatment that allows your hair to look good even without blow drying. It has the potential to just make one thing easier.

89-GIVE-A-BASKET-FILLED-WITH-VOTIVE-CANDLES

Make candles with inspiring words written on them to light each day. All you need are votive candles (boxes are sold at Michael's or any craft store) and sticky labels. You can write words on them with a bright colored Sharpie.

90-A-BRONZER-WITH-LOVE-2

Megan bought a bronzer called "Two Face" and the clasp that opens it is a little gold heart. Give it to someone (every girl loves a good bronzer!) and tell them to feel the love coming at them every time they open it.

91-VENMO-MONEY-TO-KIDS-AT-COLLEGE

Directions and plans are usually good for kids when they are struggling with grief or illness in their family. When Megan was struggling in college, her dad would send her a \$20 bill every week to get a pizza with her friends. It's a simple, fun idea to Venmo a college kid some money with a text that says "Do something fun with your friends this week!" It will give them something to look forward to.

92-SIGN-A-PUMPKIN-VALENTINE-ETC

Take a traditional idea and make it personal with signatures. This can also be done with soccer balls, hockey sticks, etc., from teammates, neighbors or friends.

93-SEND-VOICE-MESSAGES-FROM-FRIENDS

Nothing can replace the sound of the voice of someone you love. Texting is great, but a voicemail can be even better. On days you know someone is particularly struggling, organize friends to leave voicemail messages with no expectation that the phone will be answered.

94-GROCERY-DELIVERY

Set up grocery delivery for the family so that the house is stocked with food and no one has to go out. Ask about likes/dislikes/allergies. Include the tip on the order so the family does not have to worry about it.

95-HEALTHY-BREAK-FROM-CARBS

Bring them over a plate of veggies and/or fruit to just leave out on the kitchen table. A lot of foods that come into the house during a crisis are heavy in carbs (lasagna, lasagna, lasagna!), which are delicious, but can catch up with you pretty quickly and leave you feeling lethargic and down. Cut up veggies or fruit is an easy grab. It will add something healthy to whatever delicious treats are coming their way. (Remember a pretty, disposable plate so there is no expectation of returning the dish.)

96-AN-EXTRA-LONG-PHONE-CHARGER

Heartworker Kelly had a friend whose daughter was in an accident and she had no idea what to drop off at the hospital. She thought maybe an extra charger would be helpful. A 10-foot phone charger allowed this mom to lie in the hospital bed with her daughter and still access her phone. Extra chargers are always a help and long ones give people more freedom to be where they want to be in a room.

97-ACT-AS-IF-ITS-ALREADY-HAPPENED

In the days leading up to an appointment, test results or event happening, leave messages that reflect positivity to point your minds in the direction of healing. Before the results start saying things to each other like:

"Awesome! A clear scan! This is so great and we are so blessed!"

"Oh my god I'm so glad the drive to the surgery was so easy and quick! No traffic! Woohoo!"

"Thank God that the check for medical bills is on its way to you!!"

This idea may sound nutty, but it helps.

98-PLANT-A-TREE-PURCHASE-A-STAR

Plant a tree or purchase a star in honor of a loved one who has passed. When Megan's father went home to God, friends planted a tree for him in Megan's front yard. It is a constant reminder that his love is always with her.

99-A-LOCKET-THAT-HOLDS-ASHES

These can be ordered online or at a jewelry store and tend to be comforting to people. You can add a note that says "If this feels, right then wear it. If not, hold on to it for maybe another time or throw it out if you hate it. XOXOXOX"

100-A-NOTEBOOK-CARE-DIRECTORY

A notebook with pockets in it is ideal to help keep all information together in one place. You can purchase a Care Directory notebook at places like CVS. It has helpful sections for organizing.

practicing gratitude
receiving with grace
giving with an open heart



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