



# Do's & Don'ts

## Do's

- Do call and check in with me every few days, especially the first six months.
- Do offer to help and be as specific as possible. Tell me what you would like to help with (errands, home maintenance, meal preparation, etc.) and what times work for you.
- Do offer to babysit or help carpool if I have kids at home.
- Do help me find qualified, trusted professionals to help make big decisions/actions.
- Do assist with problem solving such as car repair, home repair, choosing a lawn service, etc.
- Do research, provide qualified options and give me your opinion, but allow me to make the final decision.
- Do offer to accompany me to appointments and places that may be difficult for me to go to alone.
- Do watch my physical appearance and go shopping with me for a new outfit when my size changes.
- Do encourage me to get the help I need, which may include support groups or counseling.
- Do remember significant dates (birthday, anniversary, etc.)
- Do be forgiving, loving, and empathetic.
- Do give me extra grace as the whole world has shifted under me.
- Do show me compassion and care, and realize that I am very vulnerable right now.
- Do stand with me and encourage me as I venture into the world again.
- Do help me to believe in myself. It's hard, but I can do this.
- Do keep loving and praying for me.
- Do follow through and do whatever you tell me you are going to.



# Do's & Don'ts *Continued...*

## Don'ts

- Don't be afraid to tell me that you have no idea what to say.
- Don't say you know exactly what I am going through.
- Don't be afraid to give me a hug or just sit with me.
- Don't tell me I am strong; it shuts me down from sharing what is really going on and makes me feel like I have to do everything alone.
- Don't assume I will call when I need help with something. Be proactive and offer to help with specific tasks or offer a specific time slot when you can help out.
- Don't be afraid to mow my lawn or clear the snow from my driveway.
- Don't avoid talking about my husband. I love to hear stories about him.
- Don't take it personally if I forget birthdays, appointments, etc.
- Don't be afraid to include me in get-togethers where other couples will be present. Don't stop asking if I say no, I may not be ready.
- Don't ask how I am unless you would like an honest answer.
- Don't expect me to help you deal with your grief as I can barely handle my own.
- Don't judge that I am grieving too much or too little.
- Don't be discouraged if your offer to help is met with a "no." Keep contacting and keep visiting.
- Don't wait for someone else to step up. If you can do it, do it! And do it now.
- Don't assume things are better just because months have gone by. Grieving is a very long process.
- Don't take my depression and negativism personally. Continue to love me unconditionally and consistently. Be present and available.