

What to Say to a Grieving Widow

What *NOT* to say...

- Everything happens for a reason
- At least...
- I know how you feel
- They're in a better place
- Be strong
- Let me know if I can help

What to say in person

- I'm so sorry this happened
- I hate that you're going through this
- You don't have to talk if you don't want to
- I can just sit with you
- I remember how [person] always...

What to say over text

- I don't have the right words, but I care about you
- No need to reply; just wanted you to know I was thinking of you
- You're on my mind today
- Sending love to you

Things you can offer

- I'm at the store, what can I pick up for you?
- I'm making soup; I'll bring some to you
- I can come take the dog for a walk
- I can come fold laundry for you
- I can take the kids to soccer practice

Platitudes try to tidy something that cannot be tidied. They may sound comforting, but often leave the grieving person feeling unseen or rushed. Helpful words acknowledge the reality of the loss without trying to fix it or explain it away. They open space for honesty, presence, and connection, which is what most grieving people truly need.