

“Let Me Know If You Need Anything”

(When everyone wants to help and your mind goes blank)

If you have a dozen unanswered texts or social media messages from friends offering help, **this one's for you.** A breakdown of things someone could take off your plate, sorted by who's asking.

1. For the Ride-or-Die Friends

These are the ones who will celebrate with you one day and sit in the trenches with you the next. You'd trust them with your life.

What to hand off:

- ☐ **The updates.** Pick one person to be your unofficial press secretary. They can answer the “How are things going?” texts so you don't have to tell the same story 17 times.
- ☐ **The hospital shift.** Lean on this friend to come to the hospital to be with your loved one while you step out to take care of something (or, *gasp* take care of yourself).
- ☐ **The laundry.** Because only your inner circle should be folding your underwear. If someone asks, “Do you need help with laundry?” don't kid yourself — the answer is “yes.”
- ☐ **The home front.** Hand one friend your house key and let them handle the inside stuff. Yes, there might be a pile of unopened mail on the counter and a science experiment growing in the fridge... nobody is judging you right now. Let them see it and fix it for you.
- ☐ **The “how are you, really?” check-in.** Your needs will change — some weeks it's logistics, some weeks you just need to vent. Ask one friend to check in regularly. Pick the one you never have to say “I'm fine” to, or the one who can get you laughing like you don't have a care in the world.

2. For People Rising to the Occasion

Your new village. Maybe these folks were casual friends or acquaintances before, but now they're stepping up in a big way. The perfect tasks for them are the ones that require minimal communication and coordination with you. **These are things they can "just do."**

What to hand off:

- ☐ **Yard duty.** Many of your friends would much rather mow your lawn every Saturday than send another "thinking of you" text.
- ☐ **Basic errands.** Make a one-time list of your usuals (groceries, toiletries, household basics), and ask someone to check in before a store run. Saving you the trip can save your sanity.
- ☐ **Pet parent duties.** Recruit an animal-lover in your life to help with your pet. Nothing says "I got you" like scooping poop.
- ☐ **Checking the mail.** The last thing you need to worry about is an overflowing mailbox and porch pirates.

M Marcus (neighbor)

Let me know if you need anything!

Thanks! We're ok.

Read 6:02 PM

Lawn: still a jungle.

M Marcus (neighbor)

Let me know if you need anything!

Could you mow our lawn Saturday?

Done. Every Saturday, actually.

Lawn: handled.

3. For the School Parents

If you have kids at home, the parents in their classes may be looking for ways to help. Here's how they can step in.

What to hand off:

- ☐ **Sibling chauffeur duties.** Someone would probably love to help you with school drop-off or pickup, or shuttling your kids to activities when you're needed elsewhere.
- ☐ **Meal train conductor duty.** Someone else can coordinate meal deliveries. Pro tip: **You don't have to earn a casserole by having the world's worst week.** If someone wants to bring dinner on an "easier day" and you'll be home, let them.
- ☐ **All the school extras.** Let a parent in your kid's class be your school backup. They can remind you about big projects and "dress like a superhero" day — and even grab an extra posterboard when they're shopping for their own child.

4. For the Out-of-Towners

The folks who are holding you close emotionally, but who live far away logistically. Here are some ways you can ask for their help.

What to hand off:

- ☐ **Care packages.** Crafts, activities, or comfort items for your loved one while they're in the hospital or recovering at home — plus a little "thinking of you" something for you, too.
- ☐ **Gift cards for gas or food delivery.** You know you'll use them.
- ☐ **Fun mail.** A card, a silly package, a letter or even a funny meme — a bright spot in your day that has nothing to do with treatment.
- ☐ **A standing FaceTime date.** Something to look forward to that breaks up the monotony of a hospital stay or a rough patch of treatment. Ten minutes of someone else's drama — a bad date, an office feud, anything outside of the hospital world — counts as self-care.

Tools to Make It All Happen

Maybe you hesitate to ask for help because you feel guilty accepting it (which, stop that.) Or maybe it's because coordinating all the help feels like a whole job you don't have the time or mental bandwidth for (which, fair.)

→ **Try deputizing one friend to be the manager of the helpers and systems.** Here are a few tools to help simplify the process.

CaringBridge

A free, private website where families can post updates, photos, and news for friends and family to follow. No more struggling to text every individual person back when they ask how you're doing.

Lotsa Helping Hands

A private online calendar where you can post specific needs (meals, rides, errands) and people can sign up for them directly, so coordination happens in one place rather than in a handful of cluttered group texts.

Give InKind

A page that combines a meal/task calendar with a gift-card wallet so people can send tangible or financial support like gift cards, wish list items, or donations directly through one link.

Last Word

There are a lot of things only you can do for your loved one. Bringing in the mail, folding laundry, mowing the lawn, or organizing a meal train aren't on that list.

Let your people take those things off your plate so you can focus on what matters most.