

Top 10 Low-Cost Gifts to Give Your Newly Widowed Parent the First December Holiday After Loss

If this is your first holiday after the loss of a parent, you may be at a loss for what to do or what to give family members—especially your surviving parent. Here are some thoughtful gifts that may make your parent's first holiday on their own a little easier.

Gift idea #1: Your support and presence. The best gift of all for a parent that may feel alone during the holidays after losing their spouse is being surrounded by other loving family and friends. This may involve travel costs and coordination but it will definitely beat anything you could find to wrap.

Gift idea #2: One week of freshly prepared meals or delivered groceries. The holidays can be tiring for many people but even more so for spouses who have lost their spouse. With less energy, many people feel less inclined to prepare fresh foods to eat. Consider paying for either a personal chef to come to your parent's home and prepare freshly cooked foods for a week or order prepared meals or groceries that can be delivered to your parent's home reducing their need to get out and get the food themselves. Companies such as [Big City Chefs](#), [Dinewise](#), [Fresh 'n Fit Cuisine](#), [Gourmet Grocery Online](#), [Home Bistro](#), [Magic Kitchen](#), [Netgrocer](#), [Safeway](#), and [Peapod](#) all offer these type of services. Expect to spend between \$50-100 and up.

Gift idea #3: A few hours with a professional organizer. After the loss of a spouse, there are many tasks to do and many things to organize. Whether your parent plans to move, needs to organize estate paperwork or needs to organize the house for a garage sale, a professional organizer can help. Search the [National Association for Professional Organizers](#) web site to find an organizer in your parent's location. Organizers usually charge by the hour and the rates can range widely from \$25-50+.

Gift idea #4: A subscription to [*Living with Loss Magazine: Hope and Healing for Body, Mind and Spirit*](#). This magazine offers inspirational stories and resources for the bereaved and by the bereaved. They feature the most respected and experienced educators, presenters, speakers, facilitators, authors and writers in the field. It is published quarterly and the cost is \$32 a year.

Gift idea #5: A healing book about grief and loss. Sometimes a book just helps. Curling up with the words of someone else's experience of loss seems to lessen the burden of our own and bring comfort. Here are some of my favorite books that brought healing to my journey after loss: [*Mom Minus Dad*](#), [*Healing After Loss: Daily Meditations*](#), [*This Thing Called Grief: New Understandings of Loss*](#), [*I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye: Surviving, Coping and Healing after the Death of a Loved One*](#), [*Healing Your Holiday Grief: 100 Practical Ideas for Blending Mourning and Celebration during the holiday Season*](#), [*A Decembered Grief: Living with Loss while Others are Celebrating*](#), [*The Empty Chair: handling grief on Holidays and Special Occasions*](#). Expect to spend between \$10-20+.

Gift idea #6: Connection with a local Widowed Persons Service. Connecting with another person who has lost his or her spouse can be invaluable. This free service is offered in some states is run by volunteer widows and widowers and can be a source of comfort for newly widowed parents. Call 202-434-2260 to find out if there are local WPS in your parent's area

Gift idea #7: Introduction to a local Griefshare program in your parent's community. Griefshare is a structured nondenominational thirteen-week support group with videos, workbooks, and discussions about grief and loss. The videos feature grief specialists talking about grief and recovery issues while telling real-life stories of others who have experienced a loss. [Check the web site](#) to find local groups in your parent's location.

Gift idea #8: Paid Tuition for a local class. Reaching out to new communities can sometimes help after loss. Offer to pay for your parent to take a class at such widely available learning centers such as the Learning Annex, North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement, Shawguides.com, or at local community centers or local adult education centers. Costs usually vary from \$25 and up.

Gift idea #9: Give your parent empowering information about managing finances. If your widowed parent feels concerned about handling all the finances now that their partner is gone, giving the gift of financial knowledge this holiday may be well received. Some general guides, books and memberships to start with include: [the AARP Finance Guide](#), [It's More Than Money- It's Your Life! The New Money Club for Women](#), [Kiplinger's Smart Money Women: Everything You Need to Know to Achieve a Lifetime of Financial Security](#), [The Right Way to Hire Financial Help: Complete guide to Choosing and Managing Brokers, Financial Planners, Insurance Agents, Lawyers, Tax Preparers, Bankers and Real Estate Agents](#), [American Association for Individual Investors](#), [Better Investing](#). Costs vary.

Gift idea #10: Relaxing CDs. To take your mind off of everything listening to relaxing and soothing meditative CDs can help. These artists of these CDs have soothing voices that help you relax, distress and get to a more serene place of wellbeing. An excellent gift for anyone on your holiday list. My two favorites are [Your Present: A Half Hour of Peace](#), or various CDs by [Health Journeys](#). The Cds start around \$15 and up.

Jamieson Haverkamp, author of the 2008 *Writer's Digest Magazine's* award-winning book *Mom Minus Dad: The Essential Resource Guide for Busy Adults with a Newly Widowed Parent*, the only resource guide available for adults with a newly widowed parent that covers 10 major parent loss issues and lists and describes more than 500 useful resources. Visit: www.momminusdad.com for a FREE report "Top Ten Tips for Busy Adults with a Newly Widowed Parent"