



Some Tips to Help You with Holiday Grief

During the holiday season, many people are dealing with loss and are often caught in a dilemma between the need to grieve and the pressure to get into the spirit of the season. Holidays or not, it is important for individuals that are grieving to find ways to take care of themselves. Sad feelings are normal, but there are some things you can do to handle your grief and still enjoy the holiday season.

- Allow yourself to grieve.
- Pamper yourself. Indulge in simple pleasure. Let others pamper you also. Be gentle with yourself.
- Keep a journal. Write about your emotions.
- Take good care of your health. Be sure to eat a nutritious diet, exercise, get adequate sleep and avoid alcohol.
- Set Boundaries. Be open and honest with yourself and others about what you can do, what you need and what you don't need at this time in life. Set limits.
- Allow yourself to enjoy your favorite music.
- Accentuate the positive.
- Indulge in humor.
- If you have lost a loved one, display a photo. Allow yourself to remember that person.
- Immerse yourself in things you love about the holiday. Enjoy old traditions. Create new ones.
- Talk about your feelings with people you love and who love you. Allow yourself the right to talk about the person who died. The process of sharing memories may help with the healing process.
- Celebrate life. Attend a holiday or religious service if faith is part of your life. Some people find comfort in acts of remembrance such as donating a poinsettia in memory of a loved one at church or making a donation in their name to a charity.
- Get professional help if needed. Loss can lead to physical and mental illnesses. Do not be afraid to get professional help.
- Help others. When you become strong enough, you may find it fulfilling and healing to serve others.

The wave of emotions and feelings of sadness and pain are unavoidable and are often heightened during certain times. The intense feelings will pass, but grief is an ongoing process. It gets easier with time, but there will always be an empty space. As you effectively “manage” your grief, the holiday season can be joyful, positive and life affirming.