

5.7.4 Coping with the Holidays

For those who are grieving, coping with the holidays is no small task. These suggestions will help to make your grief a little easier and your holiday season a little lighter.

Be with those who comfort you

Share your thoughts with someone you trust and are comfortable talking to. Trying to ignore the absence of a loved one can make you feel alone and depressed.

Acknowledge and accept your feelings

The holidays magnify our feelings of loneliness, bitterness, anger, frustration and depression. All of the emotions you experience in grief are natural reactions to the death of a loved one. Don't feel pressured to be joyful and celebrate; these may not be the feelings you are experiencing. However, don't feel guilty if you do enjoy yourself.

Remember

Include your loved one's name in conversation and share your memories. Remember the good times as well as the bad. Remembering is a very healthy and healing experience. You can laugh and cry as you remember times spent together.

Eliminate unnecessary stress

Don't do anything that is extremely uncomfortable for you. If you don't feel like putting up decorations, buying presents and going to places of worship, then don't do it. Keeping busy only increases stress and postpones working through grief. Lower your expectations for the holidays and do what you can when you can.

Plan ahead

Make plans for the holidays, even if the plans have to change. It is more beneficial to plan than to just let it happen. You may choose to celebrate as usual, or you may:

- Change the time of eating your traditional dinner.
- Change the room to eat dinner in.
- Go out for dinner to a restaurant or accept an invitation to someone's house.
- Change the menu from the usual (ex. cook ham instead of turkey).
- Go to your place of worship at a different time or in a different location than you usually do.
- Change the type and size of your holiday decorations and put them in a different spot in the house.
- Change the time that you usually open presents.

Tears are not a sign of weakness, foolishness or lack of faith.

Tears are evidence of the capacity to care.

– Rev. Dale Turner



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Record of Updates

Version Number	Date of Effect	Summary of Revisions
1	8/24/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original version posted.