

How To Get Through the Holidays When You Are Grieving

Losing a loved one is always hard but during the holiday season, grief can be almost overwhelming. While it feels like everyone else is jolly and bright, grief can feel like a dark coat that weighs on you heavily. While things may feel very grim, there are some steps you can take to help you get through the holidays while you grieve.

The first thing you need to do is be honest about your grief. You don't have to try to be happy or pretend that everything is okay. Your pain is very real and it is okay to feel that. So just be honest with yourself and recognize that it may be very hard. There may be days that you don't want to go to a Christmas or Holiday party and that is ok. **Don't force yourself to participate in activities you don't feel able to!**

You also need to be honest with those people around you about your feelings. Your family and friends will be your biggest support. Express to them that you are grieving and talk with them about your feelings. Allow them to support you and help you along the way!

Make a special section of your house that contains some of your favorite things that comfort you. When you feel overwhelmed go there to calm yourself and regroup. Fill this space with items that make you feel loved. A poem you love, a favorite old sweatshirt, music. Any comfort item is acceptable.

During this holiday time embrace the memories of your loved one. Talk to other family members about your favorite holiday memories with that person. Frequently it can be helpful to remember those good times together. Often it will bring laughter and light in the midst of your sadness.

Don't hesitate to attend a grief and bereavement support group or participate in grief counseling. This type of support can be very helpful especially around the holidays. Connecting with others experiencing similar feelings can be very empowering.

There are also many online grief support groups available. You can connect with other people that are grieving through chat rooms, blogs, and email. Consider this as another support as you face the holiday season.