

## **HOLIDAY BILL OF RIGHTS FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING GRIEF**

Although many people will give you advice, always keep in mind that you have basic rights as you experience your grief.

- You have the right to go from ecstatic to tears in 30 seconds.
- You have the right to be excited about going holiday shopping, only to get there and need to leave because of overwhelming emotions.
- You have the right to not be joyful every single moment or day of the holiday season.
- You have the right to not send out holiday cards.
- You have the right to not listen to holiday music.
- You have the right to be quiet, continue to grieve and be alone when you need to.
- You have the right to choose not to participate in gift exchanges and/or holiday celebrations.
- You have the right to look for and feel joy and love in the holidays and life. You also have the right to find it on your own and not have it forced upon you.
- You have the right to want to buy your loved one a present and do whatever you want with it.
- You have the right to get to your family's house late and leave early.
- You have the right to walk outside and be alone when it gets to be too overwhelming.
- I have the right to include my loved one in any activity that I want without getting "funny" looks.
- I have the right to be angry.
- I have the right to be alone and not have to explain why I want to be alone.
- I have the right to laugh at unexpected times and hug a pillow and talk to myself when I am remembering.
- I have the right to long to have my loved one back, to have the life I once had.
- I have the right to find a way to honor and remember my loved one during the holidays by whatever ritual I feel comfortable with.
- I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE ME!