

## Tips to Get Through the Holidays

- Be compassionate with yourself
  - Be compassionate and gentle with yourself as you encounter painful feelings and thoughts. Self-compassion in grief is important all the time, but especially now during the holidays.
- Savor the moment.
  - Take what you need from the holidays, moment by moment, and let the rest go.
- Keep what matters
  - Make a list of all your holiday traditions and circle those that you think are most essential.
- Prepare to answer the tough questions.
  - Think about and prepare a response to the “How are you?” question.
- Plan in some alone time.
  - Tell people close to you that you need time alone, and take your phone off the hook.
- Take good care of yourself.
  - Get plenty of rest - follow your body’s lead.
- Simplify gift-giving.
  - Ask a friend for help with shopping and wrapping; stick to cards or the same small gift for everyone.
- Laughter and humor.
  - It’s okay to laugh. It’s okay not to laugh. Laughter and humor can help us survive the pain of grief and help us get through the moment.
- Schedule something that gives you pleasure each and every day.
  - Welcome moments of enjoyment wherever you find them. Give yourself something to look forward to everyday, no matter how small.
- Say no.
  - It’s OK to say no when you’re asked to help with a project or attend a party.
- Ignore hurtful advice.
  - If someone gives you hurtful advice, give yourself permission to tell them honestly how it makes you feel, or simply walk away.
- Plan for other holidays and anniversaries.
  - Make plans to spend the day with loved ones, or some time reflecting alone – whatever works best for you. Making a plan, from start to finish, can help get you through the day.
- If you’re alone, find ways to connect with others.
  - Receiving support from others can be healing; invite a neighbor to dinner or reach out to a friend that may also be spending the holiday alone.

*“When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long, and you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong, just remember, in the winter, far beneath the winter snows, lies the seed that, with the sun’s love, in the spring becomes the rose.”*

**- Bette Midler, ‘The Rose’**

Tips were adapted from:

Wolfelt, Alan. Healing Your Holiday Grief: 100 Practical Ideas for Blending Mourning and Celebration During the Holiday Season. Fort Collins, CO, USA: Companion Press, 2005.

Copyright © 2005. Companion Press. All rights reserved.