



## Coping with Holidays

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Weddings, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas. Holidays bring joy and excitement for many people, others find it difficult to face the holidays without their loved ones.

As the holiday approaches, your feelings of grief may be intensified. You may feel anger, loneliness, sadness, depression, guilt and other feelings you felt closer to the death of your loved one. While nothing can ever take away the hurt you feel, we hope these tips will help you cope with holidays.

Remember, there will come a time when special occasions and the memories they bring will not be as painful. Eventually, you may enjoy the holidays again.

### Tips On Coping With Holidays

#### ***Take the pressure off***

Be careful of "shoulds" - it is better to do what feels best for you and your family, not what you or others think you should do. Give yourself permission to not do things.

#### ***Evaluate family traditions***

There is no right or wrong way to handle the day. Some people prefer to follow family traditions, while others decide to change them. It may help to do things just a little differently. Remember, what you choose to do this time can always be changed next year.

#### ***Cope as a family***

Family get togethers may be extremely difficult. Be honest with each other about your feelings. Sit down and decide what you all want to do for the holiday. Don't set expectations too high for yourself or other family members.

#### ***Help the children***

Include children in the discussions about the holidays. Ask them what they want or don't want. Encourage them to express their feelings.

#### ***Care for yourself***

Holidays are tiring. Get lots of rest - you will need every bit of your strength. Don't set expectations too high or overextend yourself. Remember your needs are important, don't put all your energy into looking after others. Make time for yourself. You will need quiet time to rest and reflect.

*Hospice is a community healthcare charity.  
Donations make Hospice support possible to the over 800 people who need it every year.*

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### ***Embrace your memories***

Memories of your loved one are precious. Share your memories with family and friends. *"Remembering is part of the healing."*

### ***Reach out to others***

Identify friends and relatives who understand your loss and can provide support and comfort. Talk to them. Let them know how you are feeling and accept their support. Remember, if grief or family problems feel overwhelming, seek professional help.

### ***Plan for the future***

Plan something you can look forward to after the holiday to lessen the post-holiday letdown and reward yourself for getting through them.

## **Hospice Grief Support Services**

- Books and videos for loan.
- *"Where Do I Go From Here?"* Grief Support Booklet
- Monthly Phone Calls
- Monthly Drop-In Grief Support Group
- Spring and Fall 7-Week Bereavement Support Groups
- Annual Memorial Service

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