



# Grieving during the holidays

**The holidays can be difficult for those who have lost loved ones.** With time, the sadness may become less overwhelming, but it still lingers. There is joy to be found, but those who are grieving must make a conscious effort to find it. Most find that it helps to have a holiday plan and to adjust some of the family traditions. Here are some suggestions:



Take care of yourself: eat right, schedule some time for exercise and get plenty of rest.



Plan to be with the people you enjoy being around.



Do your holiday shopping early to eliminate unnecessary stress.



If you feel the need to cry, remember tears are an honest expression of love and emotion.



Decide what you can comfortably handle, and let your family, friends and relatives know your needs.



Some have found comfort in spending the holidays somewhere else, away from home.



If you find things are not going well, set limits and only do the things that are most important to you.



If the thought of sending holiday cards is too painful, give yourself permission not to send them.



Plan your holidays ahead of time. Having a schedule of activities relieves some tension and allows you to look forward to the activities.



Include the person who died in your conversations with your family and friends when you discuss past holidays.



Do not hesitate to make changes in your holiday traditions; it can make things less painful.



Start a new tradition: discard an old recipe and try a new one, change the time you open your presents, eat your holiday meal at someone else's home, etc.



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