

Beyond the Wings



Coping with Grief During the Holidays

No matter which holiday you celebrate; Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas or the New Year, they are coming. Holidays can be stressful and emotionally taxing in general, but the intensity of grief added together with normal holiday stress can be overwhelming. There is no right or wrong way to approach the holidays when grieving the death of a loved one. Some may choose to follow family traditions while others may wish to change things up. No matter what you choose it is important to acknowledge that grief changes everything, including the holidays.

Grief is a process of adjusting to all the changes that the death of a loved one brings to our lives. Certainly the holidays are one of the things that is radically changed by grief. The holidays cannot be the same when there is a hole in one's heart and an empty chair at the dinner table. Feelings of sadness can overshadow the family celebration. Grief can rob one's interest in the normal holiday traditions. The fatigue that accompanies grief can strip a person of the energy to engage in holiday preparations. Family expectations about the holidays can differ as each person's grief and needs vary. Seasonal celebrations and family gatherings can be painful reminders of the absence of the loved one. Grieving during the holidays is difficult; however, here are some suggestions that can help those who are grieving cope with the holidays.

Suggestions for Coping

- Acknowledge that the holiday season cannot be the same
- Remember that anticipation of the holiday is often much worse than the holiday itself
- Accept and express your feelings
- Be careful not to isolate yourself
- Set limits by choosing activities that feel right to you
- Scale down by creating realistic expectations for yourself
- Plan ahead
- Be flexible
- Tell others what you need
- Do something for others
- Find moments of simple joy

Remembering Your Loved One at the Holidays

Here are some ways you can raise the memory of your loved one

- Light a candle at every meal
- Buy an ornament
- Give to a charity in their honor
- Have family members share a memory before opening a gift
- Write the deceased a letter

A Great Tip

If you decide to send cards, do so early so you will avoid receiving cards addressed to the deceased. In your holiday card invite people to send their favorite memory or story about your loved one. Each card you receive will have a delightful surprise.

Hints for Helping Others With Grief During the Holidays

- Ask what you can do, don't assume what someone needs
- Call and ask if you can help with mailing cards or shopping for gifts
- Raise the memory
- Give a gift to the person's favorite charity

*Help make a difference in the lives of those on the journey of grief and healing.
Make a donation In The Memory of a loved one at adoray.org/donate.*



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"The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same nor would you want to."
- Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

Adoray Home Health & Hospice
2231 Hwy 12, Ste 201
Baldwin, WI 54002

Upcoming Programs

A background image showing several lit yellow candles in glass holders, creating a warm and comforting atmosphere.

Silent Nights

This grief support event will include information about coping with the holidays and an opportunity to create a memento in honor of your loved one.

THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Kindly Pre-Register by Calling

Dorothy Washington at 715.629.1906

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2018 | 5:00 - 6:30PM

WESTERN WISCONSIN HEALTH

(CONFERENCE ROOM #1)

1100 BERGSLIEN STREET, BALDWIN, WI

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2018 | 5:00 - 6:30PM

ST. CROIX REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

(RIVERBEND CONFERENCE ROOM)

235 EAST STATE STREET, ST. CROIX FALLS, WI

For more information, contact our **Bereavement Coordinator, Dorothy Washington, RN, CHPN**
715.629.1906 | d.washington@adorayhomecare.org | adoray.org/services/grief-support/