

Holidays When You're Grieving

Remember: holidays can magnify loss, whether you're missing a person, a marriage, your health, or the way things used to be. There is no right way to do the holidays while grieving. You're allowed to do them differently this year.

What it can feel like

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| ☐ Dreading the season weeks ahead | ☐ Feeling out of step with everyone's joy |
| ☐ Guilt for laughing, or for not wanting to celebrate | ☐ Exhaustion from holding it together |
| ☐ Waves of sadness at songs, smells, or traditions | ☐ Wanting to skip it all |

Ways to get through

- 1 **Plan ahead, simply.** Decide what you will and won't do. Having a plan often brings relief.
- 2 **Keep, change, or pause traditions.** All three are okay. You can try something new this year.
- 3 **Make room for the loss.** Light a candle, set out a photo, share a favorite memory, or pray together.
- 4 **Have an exit plan.** Drive yourself, step outside, or leave early. You don't owe anyone a full performance.
- 5 **Tell one person what you need.** "Can you check on me that day?"

Grace for you: joy and grief can sit at the same table. Smiling doesn't mean you've forgotten, and tears don't mean you're not healing.

For me to plan

This year I will keep / change / skip...

One way I'll honor what I've lost:

When to reach out: if grief feels unbearable, you can't function, or you're thinking about not wanting to be here, please talk to someone. In crisis, call or text 988.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

MATTHEW 5:4