

Remembering a Loved One at the Holidays

The commercialization of the holiday season has led to the idea that everything always has to be “PERFECT”. Although life is filled with “imperfections”, after the death of a loved one, everything seems even less perfect and the question is asked “How do I celebrate the holiday when someone is missing in my life?” Creating new traditions and rituals that pay tribute to our memories of the deceased is one way to embrace the holidays. Here are some suggestions:

- Decorate a wreath with items or pictures that were cherished by the person who died and place the wreath on his/her grave.
- Wrap a favorite keepsake or a framed picture of the deceased and give it as a gift to another grieving family member.
- Make a book of memorabilia or pictures about the deceased and share it with one another. This is a great activity for children.
- Donate to a favorite charity in the deceased person's honor.
- Bring your loved one's favorite food to holiday parties/dinners and share it with those who knew them. Mention their name in the blessings at mealtime or make a toast in memory of them.
- Share favorite stories about the person who died. Sometimes others need permission to talk about the deceased. This will let them know you would rather keep their memory alive rather than pretend nothing has happened.
- Encourage grieving children to draw pictures or create gifts inspired by their memories of the deceased and to share them with other family members.
- Purchase a holiday book (perhaps a favorite of the deceased) and donate it to a library or school. Ask that a special label be placed in the front cover “In Memory of...”

Once you have remembered your loved one, do not forget to remember YOU. Take care of yourself. Do what you can – no more and no less. Take care of yourself.



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