

Grief & Festive Occasions

Festive occasions can be a time of mixed feelings when someone you love is not there. When family and friends gather, absence can feel more intense. You may feel out of step with the mood of the occasion and what is happening around you. There is no right or wrong way to act or feel as many emotions can co-exist e.g. sadness and moments of joy. This is a time to take care of yourself.

'Grief is like the ocean; it comes in waves. Ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim.'

Vicki Harrison

Questions to ask yourself

1. What are some of the challenges?
2. What is the most important to me?
3. What might I need to ease me through this time?
4. Who / what can support me and help things run a little smoother?



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Helpful hints & tips

- Acknowledge your feelings
- Seek safe connection with another
- Know what you can & can't manage comfortably
- Share your plans / concerns with a trusted person
- Create time for quiet reflection and be alone when you need
- Allow for flexibility and stay only as long as you are comfortable
- Prepare a simple response to leave early or decline an invitation
- Find a way to include and acknowledge the person you miss
e.g. light a candle / hang a special decoration / donate on their behalf / have a photo nearby
- Avoid making any big decisions during festive, emotionally charged times
- Give yourself permission to do less
e.g. shopping / organising / cooking / hosting
- Release powerful emotions by moving your body
e.g. walk / run / stretch / dance / hit a ball
- Remember you can be ok & not ok at the same time

Resources

How to cope with grief during the holidays

Coping with grief at Christmas: Tips for children, young people, and friends

Coping with grief at the holidays

click on each resource to follow the link

