

Walking Through the Holidays

Instead of looking forward to the holiday season this year, you may instead be feeling a myriad of emotions and stresses as you wonder how you will make it through. Asking yourself the following questions can help you to identify and face the specific feelings and concerns you have about the coming holidays.

1. How am I going to make it through the holiday season?
2. If this is the first Christmas I will be spending without my loved one, how do I feel right now? If it is the second or more, how am I planning to spend the holidays this year?
3. What are my plans for Christmas Eve and Day?
4. If I could do anything I want, what would I do on the above days?
5. Do I find myself trying to please my family (if applicable) and continuing with Christmas decorating and activities as in previous years?
6. Do I find myself dreading the places where people are happy and enjoying the season, such as stores, office parties and church services? Do I feel guilty if I don't want to participate in these activities? How do I feel about attending church during the holidays?
7. What am I doing for myself at this time? Am I getting enough rest? Am I able to sleep at night? Am I eating enough to be able to work? Am I exercising in any way, such as walking? Do I feel selfish because I want to be alone sometimes? Do I feel guilty if I don't want to do what my friends or family want me to do?
8. Am I wondering how long this hurting will last? Do I have a trusted friend who will listen to me and not give advice, but just love me?

If you are a survivor of loss, remember you are not alone in your grief. The people you meet at GriefShare are feeling the sadness and loneliness you are experiencing. It is important for everyone to have a "safe" place to go where people understand what you are feeling. One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself this Christmas is to take care of your physical, emotional and spiritual needs. This can be a turning point in your grieving process when you join others in a support group during the holidays.

by Judy Hawk

To find a GriefShare group near you, visit www.griefshare.org or call 800-395-5755.