



Holiday Coping Tips

Holidays can be manageable if you take charge of the season, rather than letting it take charge of you.

Change Traditions

Trying to make this holiday seem like holidays of the past will only intensify the difference. Gather the family together early and decide which traditions you want to keep and which ones you want to let go. Change holiday plans to accommodate the needs and wishes of those who are hurting the most.

Balance Solitude and Sociability

Rest and solitude can help renew strength. If you are invited to holiday outings, try to go. Attend musical or other cultural events that lift your spirits. You may surprise yourself by enjoying special outings, even if you feel like crying later.

Re-Live Fond Memories

It is a heavy and unrealistic burden to go through the holidays pretending that nothing has happened. Think about holiday seasons you have enjoyed in the past and identify memories you want to hold in your heart forever. No one can take those away from you. Celebrate them and be grateful. If feelings of sadness pop up at inappropriate times, such as at work or in a public gathering, try thinking about what you have rather than what you no longer have.

Find a Creative Outlet

If you have difficulty talking about your feelings, look for a creative way to express yourself. Write a memorial poem or story that you can share with others. Buy watercolors or oils and put your feelings on paper or canvas, even if it's only splashes of color. Contribute to a favorite charity or organization either financially or by volunteering to help. Buy gifts to take to less fortunate children, a hospital, or a nursing home.

Utilize Available Resources

People of faith are encouraged to observe services and rituals offered by their church, synagogue or temple, mosque, or other faith community. Many "veterans of faith" can offer you serenity, a quiet presence, and healing wisdom. You may want to look for a support group of persons who have suffered similar experiences. The most valuable helper is usually someone who shares a common experience or understands something

Sources: Office for Victims of Crime,
Office of Justice Programs, US Department of Justice.

