

Coping With Grief During The Holidays

(NAPSA)—Although the holiday season characteristically fosters feelings of happiness and joy among family and friends, the hustle and bustle of the holiday season can feel overwhelming for those coping with the death of a loved one.

While it might seem that everyone else around you is in the festive spirit, it is normal to feel increased anguish during the holidays, even if your loss is not recent. However, there are things that you can do to ease your grief during this time of year. The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) offers the following suggestions to help you cope with the holiday season:

Nourish Your Mind and Body

It's easy to overlook the physically draining effect the holidays can have on individuals, an impact magnified for those who have experienced the death of a loved one. To boost your energy level: Stay well hydrated and do not overindulge in alcohol; eat balanced, nutritious meals; stay active and find an exercise program you enjoy; and get enough sleep. Most importantly, listen to what your body is telling you. If you don't feel well, take time to rest. If your fatigue persists, see your physician.

Pay Tribute to Your Loved One

There are many ways to honor and remember your loved one and even the simplest of acts can represent his or her importance in your life. Consider making a donation to a charity in your loved one's name, volunteering at an organization that was significant to your loved one, or attending a holiday memorial service sponsored by a funeral home or faith community.



Maintain Balance

While it might feel tempting to avoid celebrating the holidays altogether, it is difficult to escape the season entirely. Family celebrations will still go on, even if they will not be the same as they once were. It's important to acknowledge that things will be different. Don't feel as if you need to attend every gathering you're invited to; however, even a small amount of time spent with family and friends can prove therapeutic. Just make sure to balance your social activities with solitude.

Express Your Grief; Maintain a Positive Perspective

It's okay to let the tears flow. Crying will offer a release and is often quite healing. However, be sure to complement these feelings of sadness with positive thoughts. Acknowledge the support you have received from family and friends in your time of grief. Remember the many happy holidays you spent with your loved one.

Finally, remember that while the upcoming days and weeks might seem daunting, you will get through them. For additional grief resources or to find an NFDA-member funeral home, visit www.nfda.org or call (800) 228-6332.