

# Coping with Loss during the Holidays

With high expectations of happiness during the holiday season, coping with the loss of a loved one can be more difficult than any other time of the year.

Diversions, distractions and outlets from the grief are all utilized. Folks often struggle between “betraying” their loved ones with feelings of holiday happiness and going into seclusion rather than depress those around them.

Is there a way to strike a healthy balance between happiness and guilt, between celebration and grief? Experts say yes.

According to social workers, one of the biggest stresses facing those who are dealing with loss during the holiday season is the unrealistic practice of pretending that nothing has changed. Below are some ideas to help cope with loss during the difficult holiday season:

- Be with other people; don't think that your presence is depressing. Surrounding yourself with loved ones during the holidays is natural and will help keep feelings of depression and isolation at bay.
- Talk about your lost loved one. Talk about what you miss about them during this season. Did they have a special custom or tradition? Memorialize them by keeping them close even when they are gone.
- Start a new tradition to further keep the loved one's memory alive. Hang a special stocking, display photos of the person or create an ornament to remember them by during this time.

Finally, do the best you can to accept that feelings of grief are going to be more pronounced during what was formerly a happy season. Working through the grief is the first step in making the season happy once more.

Happy Holidays  
from Liberty at Home!

