



MABRIE MEMORIAL MORTUARY
5000 ALMEDA ROAD | HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004
(713) 942-7673 ■ MABRIEMORTUARY.COM

As we continue to journey through a very challenging year, we know that the holidays can be especially difficult. Offered in the spirit of concern and encouragement, we offer a few suggestions for adjusting during these upcoming holidays and other days of significance. Gleaned from the excellent website grief.com, we hope this is a helpful resource for you and your family.

Wishing you peace and comfort during this holiday season

GRIEF & THE HOLIDAYS

“The holidays are times spent with our loved ones.” This has been imprinted on our psyche from a young age. Holidays are part of the milestones we share with each other and generally represent time spent with family. For many people, this is the hardest part of grieving, when we miss our loved ones even more than usual.

When you lose someone special, your world lacks its celebratory qualities. Holidays magnify that loss. The sadness deepens and the loneliness can feel isolating. The need for support may be the greatest during the holidays. Pretending you don’t hurt and/or it isn’t a harder time of the year is just not the truth for you. But you can – and will – get through the holidays. Rather than avoiding the feelings of grief, lean into them. It is not the grief you want to avoid, it is the pain. No one can take that pain away, but grief is not just pain, grief is love. *There are a number of ways to incorporate your loved one and your loss into the holidays.*

Ways to externalize the loss – give it a time and a place

- A prayer before the holiday dinner, about your loved one.
- Light a candle for your loved one.
- Create an online tribute for them.
- Share a favorite story about your loved one.
- Have everyone tell a funny story about your loved one.
- At your place of worship remember them in a prayer.
- Chat online about them.



Ways to cope

Have a Plan A/Plan B – Plan A is you go to that holiday dinner with family and friends and if it doesn’t feel right, have your plan B ready. Plan B may be watching a movie you both liked, or looking through a photo album, or going to a special place you went to together. Many people find that when they have Plan B in place, just knowing it is there is enough.

Cancel the holiday altogether. Yes, you can cancel the holiday. If you are going through the motions and feel nothing, cancel them. Take a year off. The holidays will come around again and will always be there. For other people, staying involved with the holidays is a symbol of life continuing. Let the holiday routine give you a framework during these tough times, and lean on a holiday support system.

Try the holidays in a new way. Grief has a unique way of giving us permission to evaluate what parts of the holidays we enjoy and what parts we don’t. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to handle the holidays

in grief. You have to decide what is right for you and do it. You have every right to change your mind, even a few times. Friends and family members may not have a clue how to help you through this time of year, and you may not either.

It is very natural to feel you may never enjoy this time of year again. Holidays will certainly never be the same as before your loved one's death. However, in time, most people are able to find meaning again in the traditions as a new form of the holiday spirit grows inside of them. Even without grief, our friends and relatives often think they know how our holidays should look, what "the family" should and shouldn't do.

Do's and Don'ts

- Do be gentle with yourself and protect yourself.
- Don't do more than you want, and don't do anything that does not serve your soul and your loss.
- Do allow time for the feelings.
- Don't keep feelings bottled up. If you have 500 tears to cry don't stop at 250.
- Do allow others to help. We all need help at certain times in our lives.
- Don't ask if you can help or should help a friend in grief. Just help. Find ways; invite them to group events or just out for coffee.
- Do, in grief, pay extra attention to the children. Children are too often the forgotten grievers.

A few days of significance will occur throughout the year and here are a few recommendations:

Valentine's Day is a day to honor our spouse, girlfriend / boyfriend or anyone we are romantically involved with in the present. The past can represent a hole in your heart where your loved one used to be.

Tips

- Write a love letter
- Smile a smile for them
- Light a red candle
- Tell someone about them.

Mother's and Father's Day are often thought of as invisible sad days of mourning while many people are rushing around trying to get that perfect gift or make sure they remember to send mom / dad a card. There are over one hundred million Americans that for them, this is a sad day. Either because they have a mother or father who has died or a child has died.

Tips

- Find ways to honor and remember your mother/ father or both. Think of ways to honor your child.
- Say a prayer
- Donate time or money in their name.
- Do something you loved to do together on that day.

Holidays and days of significance are clearly some of the roughest terrains we navigate after a loss. Finding meaning in the loss is as individual as we are. We often say a part of us died with them, but finding meaning is also realizing a part of them still lives within us. These holidays are part of the grieving journey that we must fully feel. Holidays are usually very sad, but sometimes we may catch ourselves doing okay, and we may even have a brief moment of laughter.

*MAY LOVE BE WHAT YOU REMEMBER THE MOST
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON AND ALWAYS!*