



This month we sat down with **Victoria Davis**, Manager of Workplace and Community Well-Being at the **Mental Health Association**, to discuss how you can cope with grief during the holidays.

1. **Remember those who have passed on.** Find a ritual that you can do every year as an act of remembrance. Light a candle, donate a gift or money in your loved one's name, or display their picture.

2. **Create a new tradition, while still keeping old ones.** It is important to acknowledge that the holidays will not be the same without your loved one, and a new tradition might help you accept the change in a positive way. Try to create new memories with your family and friends.

3. **Don't be afraid to say "no."** There may be times when you feel overwhelmed or you just need some quiet time. That's fine. Just make sure that you keep in touch with those that care about you so that they know you are doing okay.

4. **Lean on family and friends.** Communicate honestly with the people who are close to you. It is important that you let them know you may not be feeling like yourself and that you may have to "opt out" or leave some activities early.

If you feel like your friends may not completely understand or if you feel like you have no one to lean on, seek professional help or a bereavement support group.

5. **Give back.** During times of grief, giving back to others can be of tremendous help. Do something that will make you feel like you have a purpose and that will honor the person that you have lost. Consider volunteering. There are a variety of organizations that are looking for people to help them with their mission.

How to Support Someone Who is Experiencing Grief

- ◇ Invite the person to attend your holiday gathering
- ◇ Ask the person if they would like to volunteer with you
- ◇ Be willing to listen
- ◇ Remind the person you are thinking of them
- ◇ Keep in touch with the person after the holidays

Are You Experiencing Grief or Loss this Holiday Season?

Grief can affect you emotionally and physically, leading to difficult concentrating, exhaustion, and forgetfulness. If you are feeling overwhelmed by grief or loss, there is free, local help available through your EAP. As part of your benefits, you may receive up to four meetings in person with a Masters Level counselor. If you are experiencing a non-emergency concern, call our general number to receive assistance from a Master's level counselor at anytime. For emergencies, dial 911 directly.