

# Grief and the Holiday Season

Presented by

Yvonne Racine, Life Celebrant and Certified Grief Recovery Specialist®

This season of celebration can be especially difficult after suffering the loss of a loved one. As you approach the holidays or any significant date after a loss it's important to remember that intensified feelings of grief are natural. To grieve, even long after a significant loss, is not a weakness or disease, it's an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity. They say it's the price we pay for love.

As foreign as it may be for you, it is essential that you take care of yourself during this time of family and tradition.

Following are several ideas not only for coping but for helping yourself heal this Holiday Season some of which are adapted from the work of Dr. Alan Wolfelt:

- Be compassionate with yourself
  - \* It's ok to have intensified feelings at this time or other significant dates or events
- Move toward your grief rather than away from it.
  - \* Breathe into it, be present without judgment.
- Talk about your grief.
  - \* Choose people who can listen without judging you.
- Know your physical and psychological limits.
  - \* Fatigue is common when you're grieving.
- Eliminate unnecessary stress
  - \* Don't overextend, also don't isolate or "keep busy".
- Be with supportive, comforting people
  - \* Find people who encourage you to be yourself and accept your feelings – both happy and sad.
- Talk about the person who has died.
  - \* Include their name in your conversations.
- Plan ahead for family gatherings.
  - \* Choose where you will and will not participate; be ok with changing your mind.

