

## Braving the Holidays

With good reason, holiday seasons are often among the most emotionally difficult of times for people who have experienced the death of a loved one. Holidays are intended to be a time of great joy, family togetherness, gift giving, and thankfulness. Yet, if someone in your life has recently died, holidays can invoke extreme sadness, loneliness and emptiness.

Holidays may be difficult no matter what you try to do or where you go. A new approach might open doors to the celebration of the memory of your loved one.



## What Brings Comfort

### *Set Limits for Yourself*

Look to simplify rather than overwhelm yourself. do only as much as you can manage emotionally and physically.

### *Express Your Feelings*

Sharing the vulnerabilities of your emotions with others who are grieving your loss. It will bring strength to all.

### *Ask For What You Need*

Unless you tell them, other people cannot know what you need or are feeling. Ask for help with shopping, entertaining, cooking and cleaning.

### *Resist Isolation*

The love and the enjoyment of being with those who love you can nourish and aid you in healing.

### *Avoid the Holiday*

choosing not to Celebrate is a option. You may find it feels better to at Least acknowledge your loss and your loved one in some special and way.

### *Break from Tradition*

Traditions which Emphasize the absence of your loved one may not be appropriate this year. If you do keep with Certain traditions, allow for minor changes, such as Where you spend the holiday or with whom.

### *New Traditions*

Creating new rituals may be more healing for you and the rest of the family .



Acknowledge the life of the person who died. There are many creative ways to honor a person's memory during the holidays. Family remembrance activities whether done once or year after year can create a time and space where loved ones can come together, share memories, say the person's name, construct memorials and maintain a relationship with the deceased. Here are some ideas for remembering your loved one at the holidays.

- Light a memorial candle
- Write a card or letter to the person who died
- Make a memory chain. On strips of paper write special memories that family members have of the person who died. Loop the paper strips to create a chain.
- Hang a special decoration in memory of the person, such as a wreath or stocking.
- Buy a gift the person would have liked to receive and donate it to a social organization.
- Create a memory box and have everyone write down memories and place inside to share each Holiday.



Archbold Hospice  
400 Old Albany Rd.  
Thomasville, GA 31792  
229.584-5505  
800.290.6567