



COPING WITH GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS FROM A - Z

TIPS TO HELP YOU GRIEVE

BY JANIKA JOYNER, LCSW

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to my
grandfather Larry E. Smith, my
grandmother Mary E. Cuffee and all of my
loved ones who are no longer here with us.

The death of a loved one can be hard. Often times it comes as a shock and no one is ever really prepared. Losing a loved one can be confusing, upsetting and difficult to accept. Everyone grieves differently as we are all unique individuals. However, there are ways to manage sad feelings which can be even more troublesome during the holidays.

I lost my grandfather four days before I got married. That's right 1, 2, 3, 4 days before one of the happiest days of my life (and three days before Thanksgiving). I did not have time to grieve as I had to "be thankful" and finish planning for my special day. As a Therapist I understand the stages of grief and help others that come into my office with their issues. But what did I do? I pushed grief under the rug and pretended to be okay when I was crumbling on the inside.

Fast forward to the one year anniversary of my grandfather's death. I left work to meet my grandmother at his gravesite then I returned to work....and I broke down. Yes this strong, independent, always put together person started to cry in a room full of her peers. I was so embarrassed yet felt relief. I finally began to grieve the loss of my grandfather and was ready to accept that the holidays would never be the same.

In this book I will share how I learned to grieve the loss of my grandfather during the holidays. Hopefully these tips will be helpful to you.

Janika Joyner, LCSW



C O P I N G W I T H T H E
L O S S O F A L O V E D
O N E F R O M
A T O Z

A

Ask questions.

Acknowledge your pain.

Allow yourself time to process what has happened.

Accept what is.

B

Be still.

Breathe.

Be aware of your feelings.

Be patient with yourself and oth

C

Cry.

Create a photo album.

Connect with others.

Cut out bad habits.

Consult with a professional (if needed).

D

Do something that makes you feel good.

Don't shut down or isolate.

Decorate your house.

Drink more water.

Dance.

E

Exercise.

Eat healthy.

Engage in a new hobby.

Express how you really feel.

F

Find a support group.

Focus on the people who are here.

Fix up a space for a memorial or tribute for your loved one.

G

Get out of the house.

Give/Get a hug.

Get a message.

Go for a walk.

H

Help someone in need.

Have a piece of dark chocolate.

Hang pictures of your love one up.

I

Invite others over.

Increase your Vitamin C.

Imagine yourself feeling better.

J

Join a group

Journal

K

Keep focusing on the present.

Know that you are not alone.

L

Listen to music.

Learn the stages of grief.

Let others know if you are not okay.

M

Make a healthy snack.

Manage your time wisely.

N

Never engage in self-harm, excessive drug/alcohol use to cope.

O

Overcome overwhelming feelings.

Open up to others.

P

Pray

Practice self-care

Q

Question others about their ability to cope.

Quickly shift your thoughts if you get stuck feeling sad.

R

Reconnect with other family members.

Remember the good times.

Recognize when you are becoming overwhelmed.

S

Start each day with a smile.

Schedule a “mental health” day.

T

Take time away if needed.

Talk to someone.

U

Understand it is okay to not be okay.

V

Visualize peaceful scenes.

W

Workout.

Wear a piece of clothing or jewelry of your loved one.

X

X out bad habits, toxic relationships, unsafe and unhealthy risks.

Y

You are doing the best that you can, don't forget that.

Z

Zip up and go for a walk in nature.