



Holiday Inventory

This is a resource to help with the family holiday planning. Hopefully the end result will be a holiday that is meaningful for everyone.

Be kind to yourself. Nothing is as important as taking care of yourself. Choosing how or where to spend the holidays may be your biggest dilemma. If you are a new survivor, the holidays will be hard, no matter what you do. You may hurt, but you will survive.

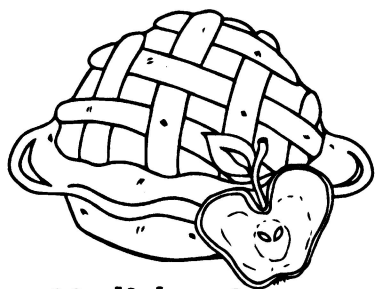
Some advance decision making and planning can help you get ready for the season ahead even though the thoughts of “holidays” may be unbearable at this moment. They will come and they will have to be dealt with. Your choices are:

- Celebrate as usual knowing and accepting that things will not be the same as before your loved one died.
- Avoid the holidays by going away (i.e., a cruise, a resort, a different city). But keep in mind the decorations and reminders will probably be everywhere.
- Do something new and different.
- Take goodie baskets to the local nursing home.
- Spend the day cleaning the sidewalks and driveways of your neighbors, if it snows.
- Take a trip to the local zoo.

You may use the Holiday Inventory Job List any way you think it would be most helpful, but let me suggest the following:

- Schedule a family meeting where you can all sit down together to fill out the form.
- Involve all family members in the discussion for the holiday plans. Little people often have opinions of which we may not be aware.
- Use the completed form as a guide to ranking holiday activities in order of importance to the greatest number of family members. For instance, one through five could be things that must be done, and six through ten could be things to do if there is time and/or energy. Be sure to delete those items that you cannot possibly do and add others that are traditions that you feel like retaining.
- Enlist the cooperation of all family members so that everybody will play a part in making the holidays as happy and enjoyable as possible for everyone. Remember – where duties are shared, no one person ends up exhausted and resentful.

(see following page)



Holiday Inventory Job List

	Do you like doing it?	Would Christmas be Christmas without it?	Whose job is it?	Is it a one-person job or can it be shared?	Is it a habit, tradition, or free choice?	Should we do it differently next year?
Decorating the tree						
Contributing to Christmas funds						
Exchanging presents with family and/or friends						
Baking/exchanging Christmas cookies						
Decorating the outside of your home						
Making long lists of what needs to be done						
Going to office or school parties						
Making homemade Christmas gifts						
Sending Christmas cards						
Buying something special to wear for the holidays						
Going to cocktail parties						
Doing your Christmas shopping						
Seeing people you never see any other time of year						
Helping/encouraging children to make some of their gifts						
Having the house very clean						
Decorating different rooms of the house						
Providing "quiet-together" time for immediate family						
Buying gifts for co-workers and teachers						
Attending special or traditional church services						
Attending special activities for children						
Doing more entertaining than you usually do						
Preparing special traditional foods						
Surrounding yourself with Christmas music						
Making an effort to help the less fortunate						