

RESOURCES FOR MANAGING HOLIDAY GRIEF

There are many good resources for helping to manage and deal with the practical challenges of grief during the holidays. The following represents only a small sample of what is available on this topic.

For more information visit kp.org:

Kaiser Permanente's website provides a wealth of information and services, including class listings, featured health topics, and health and drug encyclopedias.

- **kp.org/listen:** Download audio programs.
- **kp.org/mindbody:** Find ways to improve your mood and health.
- **kp.org/depression:** Learn about depression.
- **kp.org:** Members can make appointments, refill prescriptions, and e-mail their doctor, an advice nurse, social worker, or pharmacist.
- **kp.org/healthylifestyles:** Members can use the free online Health Media programs for a health assessment and personalized action plans for managing depression, insomnia, stress, chronic health conditions, weight, tobacco cessation, chronic pain, nutrition, diabetes, and back pain.

Holiday Coping Strategies

- Be gentle with yourself, be aware of your limits both physically and emotionally
- Consider your own needs as well as those of your family
- Cry if you want to
- Nap
- Create new traditions/ rituals
- Alter the holidays but do not abandon them
- Laugh
- Pray if that is a value and comfort for you
- Journal your grief
- Be spontaneous
- Do what you need to do
- Say No if you feel you are unable to participate in plans
- Expect a variety of emotions
- Get plenty of sleep
- If you are able, give yourself permission to take off your cloak of grief and enjoy special moments
- Allow others into your world
- Journal
- Prepare for tough questions/ plan a response
- Be careful of self-medicating (with alcohol or drugs)
- Network with others who are grieving
- Play with your pets
- Minimize your seasonal stressors
- Take good self-care
- Talk about your loved one/share your story
- Plan a ritual
- Prepare special holiday foods your loved one enjoyed
- Take some time off work/volunteering
- Be still/mindful/meditate
- Simplify
- Be with children



Other Resources:

Kaiser Permanente Healthwise® Handbook: This self-care guide has information about more than 180 health care topics—including depression and other health issues. Members can receive a free copy from Membership Services.

Books

- Holiday Hope: Remembering Loved Ones During Special Times of the Year. Editors of Fairview Press. (1998).
- A Decembered Grief: Living with Loss While Others are Celebrating. Smith, H.I. (1999).
- Unplug the Christmas Machine: A Complete Guide to Putting Love and Joy Back into the Season. Robinson, J. & Staeheli, J.C. (1991).
- Healing Your Holiday Grief: 100 Practical Ideas for Blending Mourning and Celebration During the Holiday Season. Wolfelt, A.D. (2005).

Online Resources

American Hospice Foundation — [Coping with Holidays and Family Celebrations](#)

Hospice.net — [How to Help Ourselves Through the Holidays](#)

Griefnet.org — [How to Help Ourselves Through the Holidays](#)

Mayo Clinic — [Grief: Coping with reminders after a loss](#)

Grief Healing Blog — [Tips for Coping with Anniversary Reactions in Grief](#)

Legacy Connect — [Handling the Holidays, Surviving Special Occasions](#)

New York Life Foundation — [Helping Grieving Families Through the Holidays](#)