

# Coping With the Holidays

## Checklist

Planning ahead for the holidays may help you navigate this season with a bit more ease. As you consider your traditions and tasks, use this tool to help you jumpstart conversations with family and friends.

**T** = what you would traditionally do

**W** = what you would like to do this year

### **Overall**

- Ask for help
- Make lists to stay organized
- Build in pauses for self-care
- Add in ways to remember your loved one
- Grant yourself the freedom to make changes
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### **Holiday Cards**

- Mail as usual
- Shorten your list
- Include a "holiday letter"
- Skip this year
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### **Decorations**

- Decorate as usual
- Skip or minimize decorations
- Make changes (an artificial tree vs. a real one)
- Have a special decoration for your loved one
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### **Shopping**

- Shop as usual
- Give money or gift cards
- Shop online, or through catalogs
- Shop early
- Skip or minimize gifts
- Make or bake your gifts
- Splurge on a gift for yourself
- Save gift-giving for later
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### **Holiday Music**

- Enjoy as usual
- Avoid listening to holiday tunes
- Listen, and observe your memories and feelings
- Be selective; choose the music & timing that are right for you
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### **Traditions**

- Keep meaningful traditions
- Attend holiday gatherings
- Decline holiday gatherings (or have an easy "out")
- Attend traditional services or observances
- Skip traditional services or observances
- Change the time or location of what you attend
- Create a new tradition, for yourself or with others
- Spend quiet time alone
- Visit the cemetery or memorial site
- Go somewhere new, either locally or via travel
- If exchanging gifts, stick to traditions
- If exchanging gifts, change the time, place, etc.
- Engage in an act of service: donate or volunteer
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### **Holiday Meals**

- Prepare traditional foods
- Incorporate new recipes.
- Dine out, or get take out
- Make a special recipe in memory of your loved one
- Set a place or light a candle for your loved one
- Eat alone
- Dine with friends or family
- Keep your usual time and place
- Change location, time, or type of meal
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### **Post Holiday and New Year**

- Celebrate with others
- Spend time alone
- Take down decorations early
- Spend time in reflection/ look ahead to next year
- Host a gathering
- Opt out of formal celebrations
- Ring in the New Year
- Go to bed early, or focus on self-care activities
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