

Finding joy in the holiday season can be difficult for those who have experienced a significant trauma and/or loss in their lives.

At a time when everything is supposed to be “merry and bright” and everyone is wishing you a “happy holiday”, you may feel the exact opposite...

It is the goal of this brochure to help provide ways for you to honor your feelings of loss and grief during the holiday season

How are you to be happy when your loved one is not around?

How are you supposed to celebrate when you feel alone?

How do you get through holiday traditions when a loved one is gone?



CVC provides services to crime victims and their families



YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

We can help.

To find out more about the Crime Victim Center or to schedule a counseling appointment, please call us at

(314) 652-3623

or visit us online at

www.supportvictims.org

Proud member of

United Way
of Greater St. Louis



THERE ARE NO FEES FOR OUR SERVICES.

Services are provided through the generosity of individual donors, the Missouri Department of Social Services and through the support of community foundations.

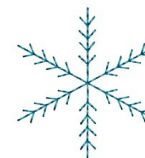
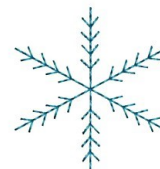
Grieving

through

the

Holiday

Season



Crime Victim Center

Counseling Services

314-652-3623



Thoughts on Coping:

There is no right or wrong way to handle the holidays.

- Some people may wish to follow family traditions, while others may choose to start a new tradition.
- Be aware the holiday season might be a stressful time for you and may affect you emotionally, physically, and cognitively. This is normal.
- It is important to recognize the holidays won't be the same and trying to keep everything like it was before may lead to disappointment.
- Be careful not to isolate yourself from others and cut off support from family and friends.
- Keep in mind the feelings of your children or family members.

Self-Care During the Holidays:

No matter how you decide to spend your holiday season, here are some things to consider:

- Plan for the approaching holiday and how you want to spend it. It's okay to have a "Plan B" too.
- Be gentle with yourself and do not expect too much of yourself.
- Don't be afraid to honestly express your feelings.
- Allow people to comfort you.
- Ask for help.
- Give yourself permission to grieve.
- Plan to be with people you enjoy.
- Try to get enough rest.



Ways to Honor Your Loss:

- If you are comfortable talking about the loss, include your loved one in your conversations.
- Look at photographs.
- Burn a special candle to quietly remember your loved one.
- Hang a stocking for your loved one in which people can put notes with their thoughts or feelings.
- Cook your loved one's favorite food and include it in the holiday dinner.
- Create a special ornament in honor of your loss.
- Do something nice for someone else like:
 - * Volunteer at a soup kitchen
 - * Ask someone who is alone to share the day with your family
 - * Volunteer in a hospital or nursing home
 - * Donate a gift or money in your loved one's name

Information in this brochure has been modified from *Hope for the Bereaved* (now out of print)