

Ways to Survive the Holidays

1. Acknowledge that there is no magical solution for eliminating the pain you are feeling.
2. Accept that you have definite limitations this year, and that is not "wrong"..... ***it just is.***
3. Realize that you must look at your true priorities and determine what is truly meaningful for you -and for friends and family.
4. Give yourself permission to let go of the "shoulds" and "have-tos" this year.
5. Many changes in your life are painful and unwelcome and you are entitled to grieve over them. Give yourself permission to do so, and then try to see if some of the changes can be transformed into challenges. The challenge is to survive—and find a new approach to life. This includes the holidays.
6. Know that it's OK to say, *"No, I can't, this year."*
7. Release the guilt over what you cannot control this year.
8. Make your needs around the holidays known, to friends, family, anyone who may be able to provide support, especially emotional support.
9. Try to find constructive things to do, at least some of the time.
10. Remember, those around you are also struggling with their own pain. You are responsible for taking care of *you*, ...just as they are responsible for taking care of themselves.
11. Talk with your family and/or friends, about personal choices. Sometimes, exploring together can bring creative ideas about how to survive.
12. Avoid over-indulgence in alcohol or drugs. Just be aware of your use of substances or activities to numb your pain.

***If any activity takes more energy than it gives you, let it go this year.
You can always return to it next year.***

