Grief is a reflection of a connection that has been lost.”

- John David Kessler, PhD

Many people experience an increase in the intensity of their grief over the holidays. If you’ve experienced a loss in your life which is impacting you over the holiday season, consider these recommendations to help you manage your grief:

- Allow time for your feelings, (if you have 550 tears to cry, don’t stop at 250).
- Be gentle with yourself.
- Don’t do more than you want to do or anything that doesn’t serve your healing.
- Remember it is OK if you don’t want to follow a tradition - many people find it helpful to try a new location, or a new way of doing things.
- Say “NO” to everything you can possibly say no to that causes you stress or drains your energy, even if it is just “No, not right now.”

(Continued on back)
• Say “YES” to everything you can that nourishes you, supports you, or brings you comfort.
• Make a list of what and who you are grateful for.
• Reach out to a kind friend who you know will be supportive.
• Don’t be afraid of asking for help and allow others to support you.
• Speak up about what you need & what would be helpful for you.

If your grief is about a loved one who has passed on, some find it helpful to consider the following:

• Light a candle for your loved one.
• Create an online tribute to them, or sponsor a family in need in their honor.
• Take turns sharing favorite or funny stories about your loved one.
• Plant a tree in their honor.
• Give to a charity in their honor.
• Go on an adventure or participate in an activity in their honor.

What to say when someone you care about is grieving:

• I am sorry for your loss.
• I was wondering if the holidays might be particularly hard for you and I’m happy to adjust or do things differently if that would be helpful to you.
• I wish I had the right words, just know I care.
• I don’t know how you feel, but I am here to help you in any way I can.
• You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.
• My favorite memory of your loved one is...
• I am just a phone call away.
• We all need help at times like this, I am here for you.
• I am usually up early or late; if you need anything, just call.
• You can say nothing, just be with the person.
• You can offer a hug instead of saying something.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk for Complicated Grief</th>
<th>Signs to Reach Out for Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of perceived support</td>
<td>High intensity of grief lasting longer than a few weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative thinking patterns</td>
<td>Unable to sleep, or do nothing but sleep</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple losses or high severity of stressful events</td>
<td>Unable to eat, focus, or concentrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited financial resources</td>
<td>Unable to take care of basic needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of depression or current depression</td>
<td>Thoughts of harming self, or giving up</td>
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</tbody>
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Contact a FEAP consultant for information, support & resources.