

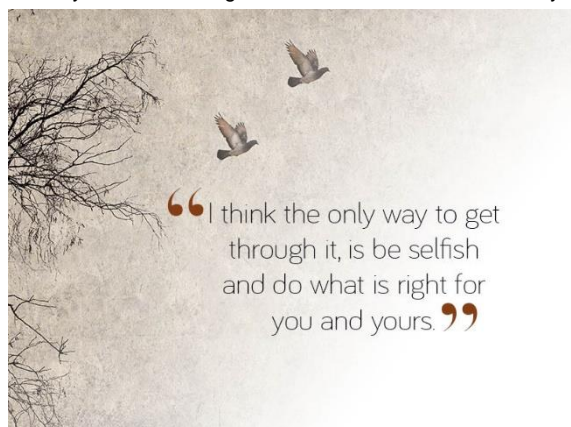


# The Companion

PSFC Newsletter – Issue #19  
November/December 2020

## The holiday season is fast approaching!

We will be told by many to be grateful and thankful, that we are blessed. We are seeing the “countdown to the holidays” on TV and soon will be reminded that “It’s the most wonderful time of the year.” We will be seeing twinkling lights and smelling cookies and other festive treats. But if you are grieving the death of a loved one, this holiday season may be a painful reminder of what and who we are missing. Not only are we grieving the loss of a person; but, due to this year’s pandemic, we may also be missing traditions and various other family members we have come to count on during our grief.



Rather than sleep through the holidays and wish they were just over, here are a few ideas to help you prepare for the holiday season.

### Repeat this over and over – What and how I am feeling is “normal”

Your grief is yours and there is no timeframe to “get over it.” Giving yourself permission to grieve, even when others are experiencing joy, is crucial to your mental health. Remember, it’s okay to feel what you feel.

### Make a Plan

Preparing for what’s ahead makes a difference. Decide how much and what you are willing to do and stick to the plan. Have a plan A and a plan B. Just remember, it’s up to you to set the ground rules. Communicate your plans openly and honestly so others know what to expect from you. Remember, it’s okay to change your mind and your plan.

### It’s okay to say “NO”

You may be used to hosting the holiday party/dinner. You may be used to doing all the baking and shopping; but when you are grieving, it may just be too much for you to handle this year. Remember, it’s okay to say “no.” It’s okay to set limitations and expectations and ask for help.

### Make Self-care a priority

Drink plenty of water, eat regularly and as healthy as possible and get sleep. These things will help you guard against physical sickness. When we are grieving, our immune system is at a higher risk because we are in constant stress mode. We are even at higher risk for accidents when we are tired and distracted. Meditation works wonders too! Remember, it’s okay to put yourself first.

### Permission to enjoy

Laughter and joy are not disrespectful. Give yourself and your family members permission to celebrate and take pleasure in the holidays. Look at pictures, share memories and say their name. Remember, it’s okay to smile and laugh.

Holidays can bring many challenges to those of us grieving, especially to those who are in their first and second year of being a survivor to suicide loss. The pandemic has created even greater challenges in getting together for support. Finding peace and blessings during this time can be difficult even to those of us who have been grieving for a while. Remember, holidays and special days are part of the grief journey and you are not alone. This grief is not a place to unpack your suitcase and stay put, but to forge ahead one step, one moment, one day at a time, knowing that we may take both forward and backward steps at any moment of our journey.

Remember that “in the midst of great grief, there are small moments that break through to our hearts. We need those to buffer our souls and spirits...when joy sneaks up on us.” ~Harold Ivan Smith, A Decembered Grief

*Peace and Love my Friends, Jeanette*

	<h3><u>PEOPLE TO REMEMBER</u></h3> <p><b>BIRTHDAYS:</b> Cullen – November 14<sup>th</sup> Robbie – November 16<sup>th</sup></p> <p><b>ETERNAL REST:</b> Artem – November 2<sup>nd</sup> Scott – November 21<sup>st</sup> Marissa – December 11<sup>th</sup> Jeremy – December 18<sup>th</sup> Leroy – December 26<sup>th</sup></p>	<h3><u>WE OFFER SUPPORT IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM</u></h3> <p><b>General support meetings:</b> 3rd Thursday of the month</p> <p><b>Sibling support meetings:</b> 2nd Wednesday of the month</p> <p><b>Support groups meet from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at 211 E. Franklin Street, Suite F, Appleton, WI</b></p>	<h3><u>UPCOMING EVENTS</u></h3> <p><b>November 19<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. via Zoom:</b> We will discuss “being thankful while grieving.”</p> <p><b>December 17<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. via Zoom:</b> Mark your calendars – this will be our last support group of the year. We will have a special holiday remembrance candlelight support group that night. We hope you all can join us.</p>
	<p>Tim – December 29<sup>th</sup></p>		