

# Tips on coping with grief during holidays

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Some comfort can be found for the recently bereaved, expert says.

(HealthDay)—People who have lost a loved one in the past year can have difficulty coping during the holidays, an expert says.

But it's important for them to understand that this time of year doesn't need to be sad and that there are ways for them to manage their grief and find comfort, according to Penelope Buschman, director of the psychiatric nurse practitioner program at Columbia University School of Nursing in New York City.

"The [expectation](#) of a holiday filled with warmth, peace and joy may be unrealistic for many who have lost a loved one, especially within the past year," she said in a university news release.

Creating a new tradition is one way to cope with loss, she suggested.

"To lessen some of the [disappointment](#), create a new tradition or practice

which might include reaching out to help others, and a conversation with a friend or family member over a shared meal," said Buschman, an expert on grief, parental grief and bereavement.

People who are grieving also need to take care of their [physical health](#) by increasing their amount of exercise and limiting or avoiding alcohol, which can trigger depressed feelings.

It's also important to reduce stress by getting the recommended seven to nine hours of sleep each night, Buschman said.

**More information:** The American Hospice Foundation has more about [coping with holidays and family celebrations](#) after the loss of a loved one.

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