



## **Balancing the Past and the Present during the Holidays**

For those who have experienced great losses, whether loss of loved ones, separation from family, or other tragedies our emotions during the holidays are always a balancing act.

The awareness of missing those who are not with us is offset by the festive surroundings as other prepare for the holiday celebrations.

We are constantly reminded of our past celebrations when we were with those we love and cherished memories flood our thoughts and hearts. On the other hand we are also drawn into the present activities with other family members, friends or just the community events as we travel around our local area.

How do we balance those two realities in our lives; remembering and grieving the past while figuring out how to fit into the present? This is the challenge we face; children, adults, families and seniors.

No one is exempt. Everyone is impacted whether we talk about it to others or struggle within ourselves.

So what can we do to effectively balance the two parts of our lives; the past and the present? We offer these suggestions

- Be honest with yourself about your feelings ; both the sad ones and the healing ones
- If you are interacting with children in this situation help them explore and share their feelings
- Plan the activities in which you choose to participate; selecting both special ones from the past and ones from your current situation
- Share your special memories and past traditions with other whom you trust to understand and appreciate them. This is especially helpful in families and for children or seniors not with their families.
- Expect to feel “Blue” and out of place sometimes. This is normal. Acknowledge those feelings for awhile, then, when you are ready. plan other activities that help lift your spirits
- Actively focus on the positives in your life. Seek comfort in the special memories of the past and recognize the new special changes in your life now.

We will always miss the people and events that are no longer in our lives. But by balancing the cherished memories from our past with the current new, positive opportunities we can find peace.