

## Some Suggestions for Coping With Holidays

*If you attend a single's open house*, remember others who are there also are doing something about their loneliness. Look for the person who seems to be alone and be willing to extend yourself.

*Buy yourself something special* - spend as much time and effort on the selection of that gift as you would for someone else. Wrap it up and select a very special time and place to enjoy the gift.

*Before you make a decision not to go to a family celebration because you don't want to make others uncomfortable* - write the pros and cons of why you should or should not go, then carefully analyze your results.

*Invite friends into your home* to share a holiday happening — trim the tree, bake cookies, make decorations, or wrap packages for children in the hospital, or shut-ins in a nursing home.

*Include the deceased in your conversations* - once others realize that you are comfortable talking about your spouse, they will relate stories about your spouse that add to your pleasant memories.

*Plan to be with the people you enjoy.*

*Buy tickets to the ballet or theater* - one for yourself and one or more as a special holiday gift from you to a friend.

*Go to a religious celebration* where you can enjoy the music and the reflective sharing.

*Start a new tradition* - as simple as discarding an old recipe and trying a new one; or volunteering at the airport to pour coffee for stranded travelers.

*Consider a "winter holiday"* - take the kids to a mountain lodge, go sledding, or just take a walk in the woods — time out to enjoy what nature has to offer in this season.

*Don't be afraid to express your feelings* - tears don't frighten people, and they are an honest expression of love and emotion.

*Buy flowers for your church or temple or organization* in memory of the deceased, so many people can enjoy them.

*Consider changing the focus of your holiday celebration* - the time you exchange gifts or the time of the feast day meal.