

## Getting Through Special Days

"How can I face Mother's Day when Mother is no longer living?" "How will I get through Graduation Day when our son, who died so suddenly, should have been among those graduating this year?" "How will I get through her birthday?" How will I get through our anniversary, or that wedding?" We often hear those questions from people who are trying to find their way through their grief. Thinking of these special days might once have filled you with eager anticipation; many now say they approach them with dismay. Below are some points to consider when making plans for those days or any other days you and the one you miss held special.

\*Express your needs. Let others know about special dates so they are aware of possible rough times. Tell them how they can support you.

\*Reflect on what you want and need to do, separate from other's wants, needs, and advice.

\*Many say the anticipation is worse than the actual day. Pay attention to your thoughts. Do you catch yourself with negative thinking such as "I can't handle this"? Try changing them into something more positive such as "I need to stay focused on the present; I can get through today." You might be surprised how helpful this change in thinking can be.

\*What would you have done on that day? Can you revise that same tradition to now help you heal?

\*Visit the cemetery or other places that remind you of your loved one.

\*Consider a new tradition.

It is wise to plan for these days. Expect that it may be difficult, and plan activities or rituals to remember and connect with the person who died. You may be relieved to discover moments of healing or comfort on that special day.

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We trust beyond absence there is a presence.

That beyond the pain there can be healing.

That beyond the brokenness there can be wholeness.

That beyond the anger there can be peace.

That beyond the hurting there may be forgiveness.

That beyond silence there may be a word.

That beyond the word there may be understanding.

That through understanding there is love.

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