GLOBAL GRIEF NETWORK | LEARNER TOOLS

Checklist: Preparing for Holidays and Anniversaries

Checklist | Weeks before, the day itself, and after



About this page: Holidays, birthdays, and the anniversary of a death can stir grief, and the days before are often hard too. Use this checklist as a timeline. Pick the items that fit you and leave the rest.

The day I am preparing for

Date

A few weeks before

- ☐ Notice how I am feeling as the date gets closer
- ☐ Tell family or friends what I am planning
- ☐ Plan something small that honors them
- ☐ Decide which traditions to keep, change, or skip this year
- ☐ Think about whether I want company or quiet
- ☐ Check work or school schedules and ask for time off if needed

Traditions

Keep as it was	Change or adapt	Skip this year	Try something new

The week before

- ☐ Lower my expectations of myself
- ☐ Plan an exit if I attend a gathering
- ☐ Limit extra commitments
- ☐ Line up one person I can call
- ☐ Prepare simple meals ahead
- ☐ Keep crisis numbers handy

On the day

- [ ] Start the day with something steadying
- [ ] Take breaks when I need them
- [ ] Eat something and drink water
- [ ] Make room to remember them, in my own way
- [ ] Let people know if I need to leave early
- [ ] Be kind to myself about how the day goes

After the day

- [ ] Rest, since the days after can feel heavy too
- [ ] Thank someone who helped
- [ ] Note what helped for next time

What I want to remember for next year

> **In immediate danger: call 911. 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** call or text **988** (US). Elsewhere, use your local emergency number and crisis line.

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