

Coping with grief over Christmas season

Loss of a loved one often leaves mourners feeling they "can't face the holidays."

The Christmas season brings back memories of good times that are gone forever and while everyone else is wishing one another "Merry Christmas" the mourner feels more like says "Christmas? Hum-bug!"

One of the worst feelings after a death is that of being alone. Genesis Bereavement Resources suggests a number of fears that crop up.

For many people anticipation of a holiday is worse than the day itself. People who traditionally make elaborate Christmas preparations may be paralyzed with fear over how to make preparations.

You might want to get away for the holidays but you can't.

You may feel a great deal of pressure to carry on as if nothing has happened.

You may wonder what traditions to continue without being disrespectful of the deceased.

You may feel guilty about having a good time.

You may be torn between what family and friends expect of you and what you actually feel comfortable about doing.

The holiday season has a way of rekindling anger, loneliness, sadness, depression and other symptoms of grief you experienced closer to the time of the death. This is not a regression.

Genesis makes these suggestions for coping with the holidays.

1. Buy a special candle to symbolize the spiritual presence of your loved one and provide a focus for talking about your loved one during the season.

2. Eliminate as much pressure as possible by looking after yourself without putting all your energy into looking after others.

3. Include your children in evaluating which family traditions to continue.

I Can't Face the Holidays



4. Consider who, where and when the Christmas tree will be put up. Should you continue to use the old decorations or buy new ones. When and where will Christmas dinner be served? Should the timing of gift exchanges be changed?

5. Should you attend a different church or attend services at a different time?

6. While you may not feel like sending out Christmas cards, they are a good way of notifying friends you only contact annually about the death.

7. If baking and food

preparations are a chore, consider buying things or sharing the task with other family members feeling the pain of the season.

8. Since the season may be emotionally and physically draining, make time for yourself and get lots of rest.

9. Do something for someone less fortunate than yourself because making someone else happy is a great antidote to sadness.

10. There is never a good time to suppress your emotions so don't start now. Reach out to others and accept their support.

11. Rather than placing all the emphasis on Christmas Day, try to celebrate the season and live in hope the future will be brighter.

12. Don't forget to include children in any discussions or plans for the holidays because children need to grieve too. Their grief may increase adults' pain but allowing them to express their feelings helps them deal with their feelings.



HOLIDAY SWEETIE: Victoria Jansen, 10 months, was delighted to attend the Christmas luncheon at the Acton Seniors' Centre with her grandmother, centre member Pauline Pratt on Friday. - Frances Niblock photo

Police Blotter

Storm accidents

Blowing snow and slippery roads are to blame for at least five separate accidents, including a cluster in the former Highway 25 and Regional Road 5 and 17 areas, early Monday morning. Only minor injuries were reported.

Police also responded to a lot of weather related alarm calls.

Bike stolen

The owner of a Honda CT dirt bike, taken from beside a Poplar Avenue garage between November 28 and 29, was reported stolen last Friday. The 1978 black and orange bike is worth \$300.

Card warning

The illegal use of debit bank cards has garnered thieves approximately \$100,000 in north Halton in the past few weeks, prompting police to urge caution when using bank cards this holiday season.

Council considers...

Cont. from Pg. 10 easily distinguished.

Footo still wasn't sure about foreign language services although he had no objection to helping hearing im-

paired residents provided it didn't land council with great additional expenses.

Staff will report to council in early January.

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IT'S YOUR PARTY

Statistics show that alcohol is involved in 42% of fatal traffic accidents. It is also involved in many other types of accidental deaths, drownings, falls, fires, etc., and in a great many injuries. Accidents involving alcohol are the leading killer of Canadians under 40.

When YOU, as the host of a party say goodnight to your guests, and you believe that the party is all over, you could later find that the results of the party are not over and you are being sued for allowing intoxicated guests to continue drinking; did you know that if your guest has an accident on his or her way home, and they are injured or killed or they injure or kill someone, you can be held partly liable. It is your responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent injuries.

As an occupier of property you can be liable even if you do not provide the alcohol, simply allowing alcohol related events on your property can put some liability on you.

REMEMBER

HAVE A GOOD TIME BUT BE RESPONSIBLE BECAUSE YOU MAY BE LIABLE



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Dec. 21st Issue
Deadline extended to 5p.m. Monday Dec. 18th
Dec. 28th Issue
Deadline 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20th
EDITORIAL COPY
Dec. 21 Issue
Tuesday, Dec. 19th noon
Dec. 28th Issue
Friday, Dec. 22nd 3 p.m.

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