

Holiday Blues

While the movie industry often portrays Christmas as the perfect time for holiday cheer complete with gifts and family times with everyone getting along famously, real life can be a completely different story.



It may be the “most wonderful time of the year” for some, but for others, family gatherings and adjusting to life following the death of a loved one can make for a melancholy holiday season.

Loss is most keenly felt at this time of year as people reflect on memories of happier times with their loved ones who have passed on. Tough as it is, I ask my patients to think about happy times and take stock of the many things for which they are thankful.

The other approach is to create a different experience. That might mean starting a new family tradition, taking a much-needed vacation or letting someone else host this year’s holiday dinner. The most important thing to remember is that it’s okay to be sad and it’s okay to miss someone who is gone.

It’s good to share your grief with others and to know that it’s perfectly acceptable to grieve. However, there is a point at which grieving may turn into depression.

Some things that may help you on the journey include your own self-compassion. Take care of yourself by eating a healthy diet and getting proper rest. Cut people a little slack if they’re not acting the way they should during the holiday season. At times, the best gifts you can give to a friend are your support, your time or a sense of fellowship.

If you or someone you know needs help this holiday season, contact a medical professional. There are a number of programs available to help you through difficult times. For more information visit:

HNHB Healthline <http://www.hnhbhealthline.ca/index.aspx>

Bereaved Families of Ontario <http://www.bereavedfamilies.net/>

Best wishes for a healthy holiday season and Happy New Year!