

Coping With the Holidays Checklist

Check what you would traditionally do with a "T" and then check with a "W" what you want to do this year. Share this with your family or have them do one of their own and compare notes.

Holiday Cards

- Mail as usual
- Shorten your list
- Elect to skip this year

Decorations

- Decorate as usual
- Modify your decorations
- Ask for help
- Let others do it
- Have a special decoration for your loved one
- Eliminate the tree or other decorations

Shopping

- Shop as usual
- Give cash
- Shop through catalogs
- Ask for help
- Shop early
- Make your gifts
- Give baked goods
- Shop with a friend
- Don't exchange gifts now but perhaps later
- Make a list of gifts you want before you go out

Holiday Music

- Enjoy as usual
- Avoid turning on the radio
- Listen to music, have a good cry and allow yourself to feel sad

Traditions

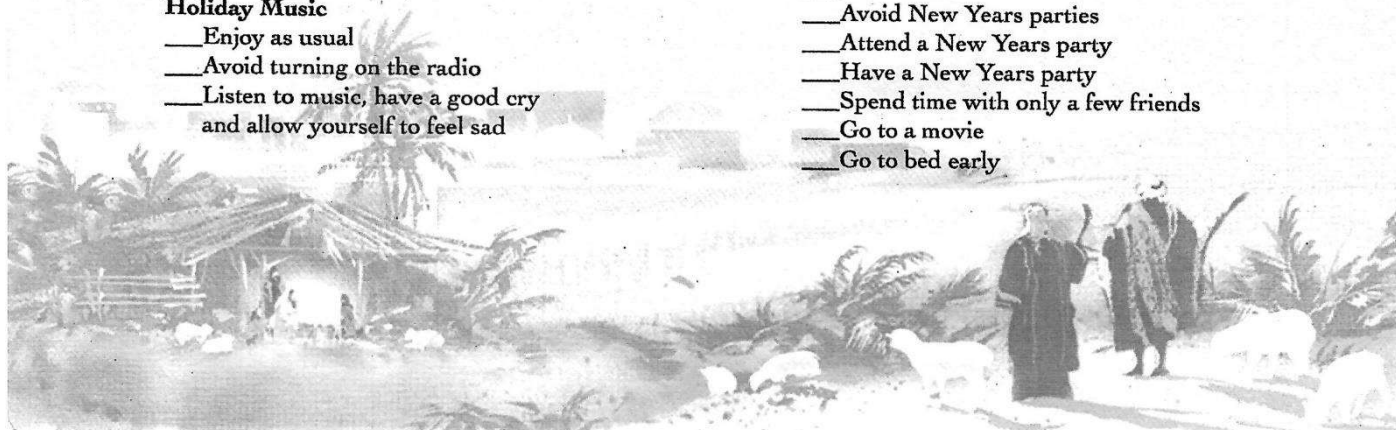
- Keep the old traditions
- Attend holiday parties
- Don't attend holiday parties
- Go to an entirely new place
- Bake the usual holiday foods
- Buy the usual holidays foods
- Bake but modify what you would usually do
- Go to religious services
- Don't attend religious services
- Spend quiet time alone
- Visit the cemetery

Holiday Dinners

- Prepare as usual
- Go out for dinner
- Invite friends over
- Eat alone
- Change time of dinner
- Change routine of dinner, such as, this year do a buffet
- Change location of dinner, eat in a different room
- Ask for help

After Hanukkah & Christmas, Approaching New Year's Day

- Spend as usual
- Remove decorations early
- Go out of town
- Avoid New Years parties
- Attend a New Years party
- Have a New Years party
- Spend time with only a few friends
- Go to a movie
- Go to bed early



If you are dreading the upcoming holidays and feel overwhelmed by the pressure of expected traditions or your "usual" ways of celebrating the holidays, this checklist can help you decide what your priorities are and possibly give you suggestions on caring for yourself while dealing with your grief as a family. I wish you comfort, peace and healing in this time of reflection and celebration.

In friendship,

Nadine