

Navigating firsts after the death of someone



Following the death of a person who is significant to you, there may be days that feel especially tough... like first holidays, birthdays, and special events that take place without that person's physical presence. Here are 5 tips to help you navigate these firsts:

1. Think about days coming up on the calendar that you expect to be difficult for you. Then plan how you would like to approach these dates and make a list outlining what you would like to do for each one. Doing this will help you feel more in control and can lessen feelings of anticipation/anxiety.

2. Talk with your family and friends about what you feel you can and can't do on these days to help manage any expectations.

3. If other family members are also grieving, where possible have a family meeting so everyone has a chance to share feelings and preferences before a special date/event.



more tips on "firsts"...

4. If you're unsure about attending a gathering/event, find out more before going so you can feel prepared and there are no surprises.

5. You may wish to continue to feel connected to the person who has died on dates that you would normally spend together. You can do this by continuing special traditions or starting new ones. You may choose to include your loved one in the day in a small personal way or do something they loved to honor them.

Ultimately, it's okay to allow yourself to feel what you're feeling and to change things up to meet your needs as "firsts" approach. Planning gives you a chance to think about and carry out what is meaningful to you and those around you as you navigate these new experiences.