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2025 December Resources

What to Do if It's Not a Happy Holiday Season

> While this time of year is often portrayed as cheerful and magical, many people quietly carry grief, loneliness, anxiety, or stress through the holiday months. If you're navigating a difficult season, please know that you're not alone, and your experience is valid. Below are several suggestions that might help you through the holiday hustle.

If You're Grieving

Loss tends to echo louder during holidays. Whether it's the absence of a loved one, a relationship that changed, or a season of life that's passed, grief has no timeline.

Try the following:

- Light a candle in their honor or create a quiet ritual to remember.
- Say their name. Share a memory. Let the tears come.
- Don't force "cheer." Your healing matters more than anyone's expectations.

If You're Feeling Lonely

Being surrounded by people isn't the same as feeling connected. If you're missing connection, you're not weak.

Try the following:

- Reach out. Send a "thinking of you" message to someone you trust.
- Volunteer. Giving support can ease your own isolation.
- Connect online. Join a virtual gathering, support group, or hobby circle.
- Name the feeling: "I feel lonely right now." Labeling helps reduce shame.

If You're Overwhelmed or Anxious

Too much noise, pressure, and performance can leave you drained.

Try the following:

- Step outside. Get fresh air or take a grounding walk.
- Take things off your plate. Just because you can doesn't mean you should.
- Breathe: Inhale for 4, hold for 4, exhale for 4. Repeat 3x.
- Text someone: "I'm having a hard time. Can we talk?"

If You're Just Not Feeling It

You don't owe anyone a festive mood. Protecting your peace is more important than pretending.

Try the following:

- Give yourself permission to opt out–or to create your own kind of quiet holiday.
- Redefine the season: Maybe it's about reflection, rest, or simplicity.
- Set boundaries with grace: "I love you, but I need to do things differently this year."

If You're Struggling, Please Reach Out

You are not a burden, and you are not alone. Here are some free and confidential support resources.

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (24/7):** Call or text 988
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text HOME to 741741
- **NAMI HelpLine:** 1-800-950-NAMI or nami.org/help
- **Postpartum Support International (for new parents):** Call or text 1-800-944-4773