

# CREATING NEW HOLIDAY TRADITIONS AFTER LOSS

FINDING WAYS TO INCLUDE YOUR LOVED ONE IN YOUR HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS CAN BE COMFORTING AND PROMOTE HEALING. HERE ARE 12 IDEAS TO GET YOU THINKING:

1. Serve a favorite dish or dessert of your loved one each year at a holiday meal
2. Serve your loved one's favorite breakfast foods on the morning of the holiday with immediate family for a more intimate way to remember your loved one
3. Use a cookie recipe from your loved one when you make holiday cookies
4. Sing or play holiday music that was one of your loved one's favorites
5. Create a memory tablecloth where your dinner guests can write memories they have of your loved one
6. In the evening of a holiday, you could have a candle ceremony where all participants are given an unlit candle. The first person lights their candle and shares a memory of the person who has passed away, then they light the next person's candle who then shares a memory, and so on around the room. After all the candles are lit, you could sing a song or say a prayer
7. Each year you can make a charitable contribution in your loved one's honor, or spend time in charitable service
8. Go somewhere where you feel close to your loved one, if you set aside a date and time (such as morning, evening, etc.) it will help this to become a tradition
9. Share a holiday story about your loved one or a holiday when they were alive, this could be a bedtime story for children, a story to be told before a meal or other ways
10. Add an extra plate to your table during holiday meals to symbolize the presence of your loved one
11. Create a memory box to have family and friends write their memories and add to the box. This could be adapted with a holiday stocking, tree, or other sort of holiday symbol for whatever holiday you are celebrating
12. One thing that can be especially difficult with grief is feelings such as regret and guilt. You can build a fire and list your regrets on pieces of paper and burn them, this will symbolize a fresh start and a way to let go of regrets and other negative feelings

(adapted from <https://whatsyourgrief.com/creating-new-tradition-after-a-death/>)



Helping Handout

[www.lifehelper4you.com](http://www.lifehelper4you.com)