

A quarterly publication from



There Is No Right Way to Grieve During the Holidays

FALL AND HOLIDAY ISSUE | OCTOBER THROUGH DECEMBER

The holidays can bring warmth and togetherness, but after someone you love has died, they can also make an absence feel especially sharp.

Familiar music, meals, gatherings, and traditions may carry memories you welcome one moment and find overwhelming the next. You may want company, quiet, celebration, or simply to make it through the day. All of those responses are understandable.

There is no correct way to grieve during the holidays. You are allowed to keep the traditions that comfort you, change the ones that do not, and decide on one invitation at a time.

The holidays may look different, but the love behind your traditions remains.

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Make room for your needs during the holidays.

Remembering Well

Include your loved one in meaningful ways.

From Our Bookshelf

A practical look at Understanding Your Grief.

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Have a conversation your family will value.

A Message of Hope

Gentleness for a changed season.

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Make Room for What You Need This Holiday Season

Holiday grief rarely follows a predictable pattern. An event you expected to be difficult may feel comforting, while a simple trip to the store may bring tears. Try to leave room for your plans and emotions to change.

Before a gathering, consider what would make the day more manageable. You might drive yourself so you can leave when ready, ask a trusted person to check in with you, or decide in advance which traditions you want to join. It is ok to say no and give yourself permission to not attend, but it is also ok to say yes and allow yourself time to smile and laugh without feeling guilty.

Give Yourself Permission To

- Say yes to what feels supportive and no to what feels overwhelming.
- Shorten a visit or leave a gathering early.
- Talk about your loved one and use their name.
- Change a tradition or create a new one.
- Feel moments of joy without guilt.

Make a Gentle Plan

Choose one person who understands that the day may be difficult. Tell them what kind of support would help and agree on a simple signal if you need a break.

If plans change, let them change. Grief requires flexibility, especially during a season filled with expectations.

Remembering Well

Include Your Loved One in a Meaningful Way

Remembering someone does not have to be formal. Choose an idea that fits your family and the person you are missing:

At Home

- Place a favorite photograph near the table.
- Prepare one of their favorite recipes.
- Light a candle or display a special ornament.

With Family

- Invite everyone to share a favorite story.
- Make a donation in their memory.
- Write memories on cards and save them together.

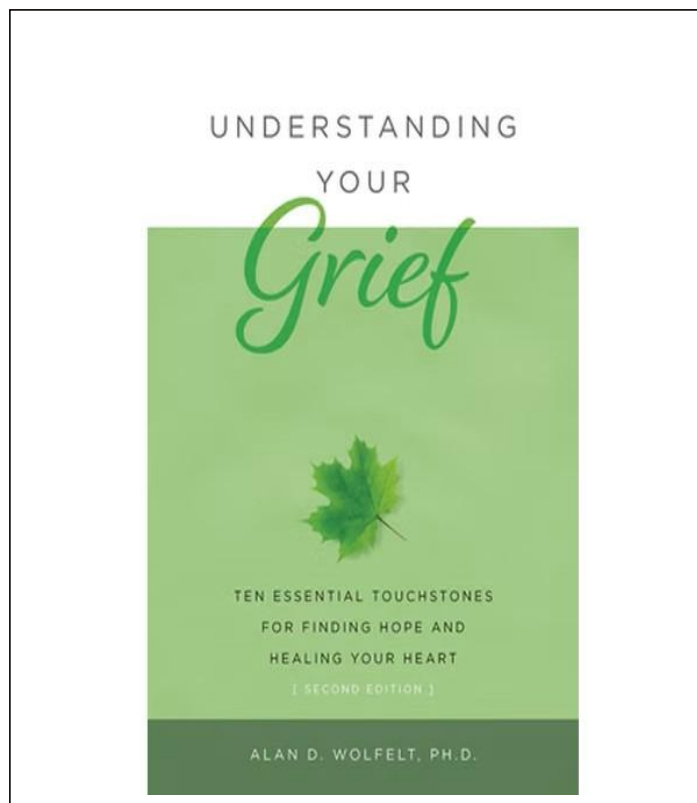
A small act of remembrance can acknowledge both the sadness of their absence and the lasting place they hold in your family.



Understanding Your Grief

Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart

by Alan D. Wolfelt



Why this book

Alan D. Wolfelt presents grief as a personal journey that deserves patience and attention. His approach does not ask readers to forget or move on. It encourages them to understand their grief and care for themselves as they mourn.

What readers will find

The book is organized around ten practical touchstones, with reflection questions and guidance readers can work through at their own pace. Its structure makes it approachable when concentration and energy are limited.

Who may appreciate it

Someone who wants gentle direction, a person whose loss is recent or longstanding, or a family member seeking a clearer understanding of the mourning process.

Our Takeaway

Your Grief Is Your Own

Just as no two autumn leaves are exactly alike, no two people experience grief in exactly the same way. Your relationship, your memories, and your loss are uniquely yours.

This fall, give yourself permission to grieve in your own way and at your own pace. There is no timetable you must follow and no “right” way to mourn.

Be patient with yourself. Your grief is as unique as the love behind it.

Inspired by Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt’s Touchstone: “Embrace the Uniqueness of Your Grief.”

An Idea for Families

Read one touchstone at a time and pause when you need to. Write down one idea that feels useful or share a passage with someone who wants to support you. The book can be revisited as your needs change. Please reach out to me if you are interested in reading this book. We will have several copies at both locations, and we would be happy to loan it out to families as we are able.

Ask us about grief books and other resources for children and adults that may fit your circumstances.

The Conversation Your Family Will Be Glad You Had

The holidays often bring families together, making this a natural time to share important wishes. The conversation does not need to be long or formal. A calm, honest beginning is enough.

- 1 Choose the right moment**
Find a quiet time when no one is rushed and explain that your goal is to make future decisions easier.
- 2 Share what matters most**
Discuss the people, traditions, beliefs, music, or places you would want reflected in a service.
- 3 Put wishes in writing**
Record your preferences and tell someone you trust where the information will be kept.
- 4 Cover practical details**
Identify important documents, insurance information, military records, and the person who should be contacted.
- 5 Invite questions**
Give family members time to think and revisit the conversation later. Everything does not have to be decided at once.

A Message of Hope

The holidays may never feel exactly as they once did, and they do not have to. A changed tradition can still hold love. A quiet day can still hold meaning. A smile can live beside sadness.

Be gentle with yourself and with one another. The person you miss remains part of the stories you tell, the values you carry, and the love that continues through your family.

We're Still Here

Our care does not end with the funeral. Grief continues long after the service, and so does our commitment to the families we serve. If you need someone to visit with, have a question, or would like help locating grief resources, please contact us.

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