

NEW YEARS *and* GRIEF

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New Years Eve & Day Facing A New Year Can Be Difficult After The Death Of A Loved One By Christine MacMillan, MSW, RSW

While other people compile their resolutions for the start of the new year which will more than likely be something like resolving to be more patient, lose weight or start exercising, a new year without a loved one poses different challenges. You may have managed, with tears and longing, to get through Christmas without your loved one but

you may be surprised that New Year's Eve as well as the new year may be emotionally confusing and difficult. You may have been anticipating some relief in leaving behind a year marked with memories of loss and pain but may find the new year does not live up to your expectations; instead you may be feeling some anxiety or apprehension.

Understand that the coming year also marks time without your loved one. This will be a time when you will start to create memories which do not include your loved one so do not underestimate the power of this process as you strive to move through your grief. Be sure to be gentle with yourself and try these resolutions for the coming year:



RESOLUTIONS *in* GRIEF

- Be courageous and review the last year –including the pain, the challenges as well as the ‘gifts’.
- Do not compare your grief journey with others or where you believe you “ought” to be; each grief journey is unique; accept you are where you are supposed to be.
- Give yourself permission to “not be your usual self right now” do things differently if you wish.
- Get plenty of rest; slow down, stop, relax or sleep; it can all be very restorative since grieving requires a lot of energy.
- Exercise gently; go for walks, stretch, try yoga, deep breathing, or meditation.
- Make healthy food choices and drink plenty of water.
- Surround yourself with those who are supportive of your grief and who do not try to “hurry” you through it.
- Be tolerate, gentle and patient with yourself; your body and soul naturally want to heal, so allow that to unfold one day at a time

The beginning of the New Year is so often attached with great expectations and when you are facing it without the presence of a loved one it can sometimes seem overwhelming. Be sure to be kind to yourself and take the necessary time you need to grieve. This may in fact be the best resolution you can make.