

# Coping with Grief: Tips and Resources

## **1. Say “No” If You Feel Overwhelmed.**

There are only so many functions you can attend (or host), especially if you are busy with your day-to-day obligations and have limited time off. Say no to invitations that feel overwhelming or tell family and friends you just cannot host your normal holiday party. Reach out to family and friends and suggest spending one-on-one time with friends or family in the new year when calendars are a bit more open and interactions can be more intimate and meaningful.

## **2. Be Kind To Your Wallet.**

Manage your holiday spending so that it is comfortable for your budget. If expensive gifts, travel or parties cause you financial stress, look for alternative options that won't leave you with large bills to start the new year.

## **3. Know When To End Unwanted Conversations.**

If it feels as those friends or family grill you about how you are feeling, your choices, or moving forward remember you have options. It may help to rehearse any replies to anticipated questions in advance of gatherings, so you don't find yourself struggling to figure out what to say. You can change the subject of the conversation if you don't feel like having a particular discussion. Lastly, you can simply inform someone that the topic they are bringing up is a sensitive one that you would rather not discuss.

## **4. Honor Those Who Have Passed On.**

Remember that it is okay to be sad. There is no way to replace the presence of a loved one who has passed away, but one way of coping is to honor their memory rather than mourn their absence. If continuing old traditions is too painful, opt to create new ones that you think your loved one would have enjoyed.

## **5. Find Other Survivors Who Understand What Your Feelings.**

There are hundreds of organizations that can help connect you to other survivors. Consider becoming engaged with organizations that offer peer counseling and support groups, help connect to others who are also managing their journey with loss. Know that you are not alone.

## **6. Seek Professional Mental Health Care.**

The military provides options to seek both clinical and non-clinical mental health care. You do not need to be in crisis to seek support, it is available to help you cope with your grief and help you to thrive.

## RESOURCES:

**Military OneSource** - Military OneSource is a 24/7 connection to information, answers and support. As a DoD-funded program, their mission is to advance the wellbeing of Service members and the immediate families of active duty, National Guard and Reserve (regardless of activation status), Coast Guard when activated for the Navy, DoD expeditionary civilians, and survivors. [MILITARY ONE SOURCE](#) or call 800-342-9647.

**Military and Family Life Counseling Program** - The Military and Family Life Counseling Program supports Service members, their families, and survivors with face-to-face non-medical counseling services worldwide. Trained to work with the military community, military and family life counselors deliver flexible, non-medical counseling and presentations at locations on and off the installation. Counseling services with child and youth behavioral counselors are also available for military children. Military and Family Life Counseling services are confidential; however, counselors are mandated reporters of situations that include harm to self or others and other duty to warn situations. [Military Family Life Counselors](#)

**Veterans Affairs Bereavement Counseling** - Bereavement support to parents, spouses and children of active-duty and National Guard or reserve members who die while on military duty. Call 202-461-6530 or email [vetcenter.bereavement@va.gov](mailto:vetcenter.bereavement@va.gov) to use this service.

**TRICARE Beneficiaries** - Mental health care services are available for you during times of grief. Outpatient psychotherapy is covered for up to two sessions per week in any combination of individual, family, group or collateral sessions.

**Telemynd (Available to TRICARE Beneficiaries)** – Provides telemental health allowing access mental care from your home. All that's needed is a computer with a webcam and internet access. Your provider will interact with you through a secure HIPAA-compliant software. [Telemynd Virtual Specialty Behavioral Health](#) or call 1-888-991-2103. (Audio-only telephone services are not covered under TRICARE's telemedicine benefit.)

**National Resource Directory (NRD)** – The NRD is a database of validated resources that supports recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration for service members, veterans,

family members, and caregivers. The NRD is hosted, managed, maintained, sustained and developed by the Defense Health Agency's Recovery Coordination Program. The directory can be searched by location to find resources in your area. [National Resource Directory - Survivors](#)

**Other Non-Profit Organizations** – Military One Source maintains a list of resources available to survivors. On the resource page you can find resources for bereavement counseling, guides and directories, support organizations, and bereavement camps and groups for children. [Military One Source – Survivor Resources](#)