

“Tis the Season to Be Jolly – Joy Killers”

Temple of Deliverance COGIC

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LONELINESS

GRIEF

DEPRESSION

Loneliness is defined as: sadness because one has no friends or companion; feeling isolated. It is the feeling we get when our need for having social contact is not being met. It causes people to feel empty, alone, unwanted. It is not the same as being alone. You might choose to be alone and live happily without much contact with other people. Or you may have lots of social contact, or be in a relationship or part of a family and still feel lonely. Thus, loneliness can even be felt when one is in a relationship or when surrounded by other people.

In your opinion, what are some of the causes of loneliness?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

EFFECTS:

- Causes people to feel empty, alone and unwanted
- Can cause emotional, physical and social damage. Author Guy Weirich in his article *Surviving Loneliness* over the holidays states, “*Loneliness predisposes us to depression; increases our risk of Alzheimer’s disease; suppresses our immune system; stresses our cardiovascular system and when chronic, affects our longevity.*”
- Loneliness also can impact our social functioning as lonely people develop defense mechanism that makes it difficult for them to develop new connections with others or deepen preexisting ones.
- The rejection lonely people already feels also causes them to have pessimistic and defeatists outlooks and to be skeptical as to whether others are interested in them or care about them. So they are reluctant to reach out and initiate contact with friend and acquaintances.

GRIEF

Grief – is a reaction to a loss of someone or something. “Grief is the process and emotions that we experience when our important relationships are significantly interrupted or (more frequently) ended, either through death, divorce, relocation, theft, destruction, or some similar process.” Its pains are usually heightened during the holidays, especially if it is the first holiday after the loss of a love one.

Name other sources of grief.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, “grief can last anywhere from 6-8 weeks before you begin to feel better.”

Feelings associated with grief (*note grief affects people differently):

1. Emptiness
2. At a loss
3. Depression
4. Can be accompanied with the inability to eat or sleep
5. Profound sadness
6. Guilt or regret
7. Fear
8. Helplessness

9. Anger at oneself, the person who died, or even God

Expected Grief vs. Unexpected Grief

Knowing ahead of time a person is dying gives us time to “brace ourselves;” to plan as oppose to dealing with “sudden” or unexpected death of a love one. Healing process may be a little longer with unexpected grief. Feelings of guilt or regret may linger a little longer

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What’s important to know:

- 1. Grief affects people differently**
- 2. There are no “magic” words one can say to a grieving person.**
- 3. There is no timetable for the grieving process.**
- 4. You can survive it!**

DEPRESSION

Every one of us may experience feelings of being sad and down. This is simply NORMAL. Coping with depression is never easy, but can be especially hard during the holidays. Reminders of what you don’t have (money, a mate, lots of friends, the job you’ve been praying for, etc.) are constantly in front of you with seemingly no way to escape. Some refer to depression this time as the “holiday blues.” Moreover, both loneliness and grief can lead to depression for an individual, particularly around the holidays.



Some of the sources depression during the holidays include but are not limited to:

- stress
- [fatigue](#)
- unrealistic expectations
- over commercialization
- financial stress
- the inability to be with one's family and friends,
- In addition to sadness, many people feel holiday anxiety or stress, particularly when they feel unable to cope with the demands upon them.

YOU CAN SURVIVE JOY KILLERS



SURVIVAL TIPS

It has often been stated that it's not necessarily the holidays that cause the blues for an individual; rather it is the person's expectations of it.   Pause for a moment. Really think about that statement.

We can't make the holidays go away, but the following are some tips that will enable you to better cope!

- ✓ Don't get hung up on what the holidays are *supposed* to be like and how you're *supposed* to feel. If you're comparing your holidays to something you read or about or saw on television, then you will always come up short.
- ✓ Control your thinking. Neither you nor your situation is to be pitied.
- ✓ Prepare for it. Plan for it. Do something different!! **Get a life! – This may involve taking actions that involve risks!** Take actions that involve risks! It is important to take proactive steps so that you do not spend the holidays alone. Reach out to friends and family and find out what they are doing. "What are you doing for Christmas?" Studies show that loneliness makes us underestimate the extent to which those around us care about us as we are more likely to view our friends and friendships more negative than we should.
- ✓ Invest in someone else.
- ✓ Look for what may be a repeat source of trouble and take steps to avoid it.
- ✓ "Writing about your holiday blues can actually change them," says Dr. Darlene Mininni, author of *The Emotional Toolkit*. "People who write

about their deepest feelings when they are upset are less depressed, less anxious and more positive about life than people who write about mundane things. She suggest that you write about 15 minutes a day for 3 or 4 days in a row and answer such questions as why does this upset me so much?

- ✓ **EXERCISE.** Exercise decreases your feelings of depression plus boosts your energy.
- ✓ **Lean on your support system.** “If you’ve been depressed, you need a network of close friends and family to turn to when things get tough,” says David Shern, PhD, president and CEO of Mental Health America in Alexandria, Va. So during the holidays, take time to get together with your support team regularly -- or at least keep in touch by phone to keep yourself centered.

Victory!

Keep pushing,

lies ahead for you!