

## Managing Holiday Grief

Unresolved grief can wake you up with a cold slap in the face around the holidays. Our culture promotes the holidays as the time for happy dinners and visits with family. But, what if you've lost an important family member? Then, the holidays may seem to just accentuate feelings of emptiness or loneliness.

I certainly struggled with this issue until I met Dr. Jon Connelly. Jon pointed out that what we really get from someone is acquiring experiences of being with them. Nothing can ever take experiences we've acquired away from us. In addition, we can't lose things that that never happened, or were never acquired. So, in essence, we never lose anything.

What causes grief is the perception of a lost connection with someone. But, you can still feel connected to your loved one, right here, right now. That connection has not been lost.

To sense the connection, recall an experience you acquired with your loved one. Feel as if they're right here with you now loving you and reassuring you that they're okay now, and they want you to be okay too. Stay with it for at least 5 minutes. What does your loved one want you to know? What would they say to you at this moment?

I don't want to get into religious philosophy here, or claim that anything I am saying is "The Truth" about anything. I am just presenting ways of thinking about things and encouraging you to consider the effect that thinking of it that way has for you. If it's helpful, that's great. If it's not, that's okay too.

This way of thinking has had a profound effect on me, and dramatically transformed the feelings of grief, anger, and sorrow I'd been feeling. I hope it can provide some comfort for you on your journey as well.

When I work with people on grief issues, I take them into a longer guided imagery experience that is often very healing and transformative. No matter how long you've been struggling with grief, this process can help you find peace, comfort, and enthusiasm for life again. Call me at 423.876.3490, or email me at [armstronglpc@msn.com](mailto:armstronglpc@msn.com) to schedule an appointment for this.

Take care,

Courtney