



Getting Through Difficult Days & Special Occasions



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Special occasions — such as Valentine’s Day, anniversaries, birthdays, holidays, or family milestones — can feel especially hard when you’re grieving.

Even dates that once felt joyful may now bring a mix of emotions: sadness, longing, guilt, anger, or a deep sense of absence. If you find these days difficult, please know that this is a very natural part of grief.

This guide offers gentle support and practical ideas to help you move through these moments in a way that feels right for you.



Why These Days Can Feel So Difficult

Special occasions often:

- Remind us of what has changed
- Highlight who is missing
- Bring expectations from others to “celebrate”
- Stir memories when emotions are already heightened

You may find that feelings resurface unexpectedly — even if you thought you were coping well. This does not mean you are going backwards. It simply means you are human.



There Is No Right Way to Approach These Days

Some people want to mark the occasion. Others want to ignore it completely. Many feel unsure what they need until the day arrives.

All of these responses are valid.

You are allowed to:

- Keep things simple
- Change plans at the last minute
- Say no to invitations
- Treat the day like any other
- Acknowledge it quietly, in your own way

Grief does not follow social rules — and neither do you have to.

Gentle Ways to Care for Yourself on Special Occasions

If it feels helpful, you might consider one or two small, supportive actions:

Lower expectations - The goal is not to “get through it well” — it’s simply to get through it.

Create a soft plan - Knowing roughly how you’ll spend the day can help reduce anxiety. Keep plans flexible and low-pressure.

Allow moments of comfort - A favourite place, familiar routine, warm drink, or quiet walk can provide a sense of steadiness.

Acknowledge your loved one in your own way - This might be lighting a candle, visiting a special place, writing a few words, or doing something they enjoyed. There is no obligation to do this — only if it feels right.



When Emotions Catch You Off Guard

Sometimes feelings rise unexpectedly — a song, a card in a shop, a comment from someone else.

When this happens:

- Pause and breathe slowly
- Remind yourself that this moment will pass
- Step away if you need to
- Let the feelings exist without judging them

You are not being weak or dramatic. You are grieving.

Supporting Others During These Times

You may also be trying to support someone else while struggling yourself.

Helpful support often looks like:

- Checking in without expectations
- Allowing space for silence or tears
- Accepting that they may not want to celebrate
- Letting them talk about their loved one, or not — either is okay

You don't need the right words. Being present is enough.

If These Days Feel Too Much to Manage Alone

If special occasions leave you feeling:

- Overwhelmed for days or weeks
- Unable to cope emotionally
- Isolated or distressed
- Struggling to function day to day

Please consider seeking additional support. This might be through someone you trust, your GP, or bereavement support services.

We have created a range of **free bereavement support guides** to help those who are finding grief particularly difficult. These guides are available to read in your own time and may offer reassurance, grounding techniques, and gentle guidance when things feel heavy.



A Gentle Reminder

You don't have to celebrate.
You don't have to explain.
And you don't have to be okay.

However you move through special occasions is enough.

At **Complete Funeral Care**, our support continues beyond the funeral. We are here for the quieter days — and the difficult ones — whenever you need us.

If you would like further support or guidance, please don't hesitate to reach out. Sometimes, simply being heard can make a difference.

******* ❤️ *If you are in immediate distress or feel unsafe, please call **999**, seek urgent medical support or contact a crisis service straight away on **116 123** (Samaritans) ❤️ ********