

Holiday Blues? Extend Yourself Some G.R.A.C.E.

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The Holidays are here! We should all be happy, right?

'Tis the season where many people are celebrating their first Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanzaa, or New Year without a special person or family. While being happy is the message for the holidays, to others, it's easier said than done. The holiday season is when some people have the most difficult time being joyful; feelings of depression or stress may be more intense than usual.

Think about it.

You've celebrated many holidays and this special person has always been there with you, until one day, they're not. Whether it's a tough divorce, a breakup, the loss of a loved one, or not being able to gather with your family due to the COVID-19 pandemic; whatever it may be, each one can be a factor into the mental battle of being happy or wanting to sulk in sadness.

This has undoubtedly been an unprecedented year. What we're used to doing around this time of year is now limited or nonexistent. As tough as the year has been, the last thing we should do is be tough on ourselves. Instead, we should treat ourselves with G.R.A.C.E.

G - be GENTLE with yourself, your feelings and your emotions.

R - REFLECT/REALIZE. Reflect on all those good times. Cherish them, embrace them and let them fuel you to continue thriving. Realize life is about adjusting and recreating new memories.

A - ACCEPT your emotions as they are. Forcing yourself to be happy during the holidays can be more draining than helpful. It's ok to express yourself.

C - CARE. Self-care to be exact. Do something positive for yourself that keeps your spirits high - continue with your healthy habits.

E - ENJOY the moment.

As we countdown toward the end of the year, continue to value your mental wellness. Though 2020 may have been unpredictable, one thing that's still in our control is the way we approach each day. Every day is different. It's another day and opportunity to be better than we were the day before. Keep loving yourself, keep telling yourself that you're worthy. Remind yourself that you are valuable and that you deserve the best.