



THE FED'S GUIDE TO

SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

Despite messages to the contrary, holiday times (like Christmas, Hanukkah, Thanksgiving, or Valentine's Day) can be pretty tough. Many of us are alone, or have really complicated, challenging family or friend dynamics to face. Then, on top of that, there's so much pressure to have fun, buy gifts for everyone, make delicious home cooked meals, have the best family ever and time off to relax.

If you're not having the best time ever, you're not alone. In fact, most people feel this way to some degree, we just don't talk about it much. Movies can be bad for painting a picture of what holidays are supposed to be, but real life is nothing like that for most of us, especially those of us in and from care.

IT'S TOTALLY NORMAL TO FEEL...

- * like the holidays are annoying
- * like the holidays are awesome!
- * like you wish you had people to celebrate with
- * like you wish your holiday was like everyone else's you know
- * like there's so much pressure to have fun or make things really fun for others
- * like you can't afford to do what you want
- * like, "these holidays are rooted in painful histories and that we might not want to celebrate them"
- * like, "how can people celebrate when there's so much pain in the world?"
- * like, "why do people care so much about material possessions?"
- * like, "I didn't get presents. What am I gonna say when everyone asks what I got?"
- * like you wish you could visit with all the people you love but you can't
- * like you should be able to buy people presents, but can't
- * like you wish you could be with your bio family
- * like you wish you didn't feel left out and awkward around your foster family
- * like whenever you get around your family, they treat you like a kid and it's frustrating
- * like your family is super messed up
- * bad about yourself because you can't provide your family with the holiday you'd like (psst, they mostly just want to be with you and that's what they'll remember)
- * left out of everything because you celebrate Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, another holiday, or celebrate nothing during this time and wonder why everyone assumes you celebrate Christmas
- * like, "can't it just be over already?"
- * stressed
- * angry
- * depressed
- * lonely

WHAT DO I DO ABOUT IT?

Sometimes, it's helpful enough just to remember these things, and that whatever we're experiencing, it's normal and okay and pretty common.

Sometimes, though, it's not enough, then it becomes really important to reach out to our communities for support during this time; we all deserve to be part of a supportive community.

HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS FOR GETTING THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS

1. Get sleep if possible. This can really affect our mood, more than we would think.
2. Joyful movement sends a bunch of happy-making chemicals through our bodies.
3. Journal. Get your feelings out in the open and have a good cry, maybe while listening to angry/sad music.
4. Remember that it's going to be over soon, and the new year is a fresh new year.
5. Remember that so many people are feeling just like you, so re-read this list or reach out to some people you know who are in the same position.
6. Keep in mind that the older you get, the better holidays get because you can choose your own traditions.
7. If you have loved ones nearby, reach out to them. The family we choose is often more important to us than our bio families.
8. If you can look into supports in your community that are open over the holidays, including youth drop-in centres, Friendship Centres and...
9. Don't forget the 24/7 crisis lines. There are really nice volunteers sitting there waiting to talk to you. You can call to talk any time you're feeling down.

1-800-SUICIDE Available 24/7
1-800-784-2433

BC MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT LINE
Available 24/7
310-6798 (no need to dial an area code)

KIDS HELP PHONE Available 24/7. No age limit.
1-800-668-6868

LIVE CHAT Available from noon to 1:00 AM
<https://youthinbc.com/>

*The bottom line is **DO WHATEVER FEELS RIGHT FOR YOU.**
Everyone deserves to part of a supportive community,
so reach out if you feel like you can.*



YOUR FED FAMILY

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Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks



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