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Chapters

turning the pages through grief



No Thanks giving

by Paulette LeBlanc

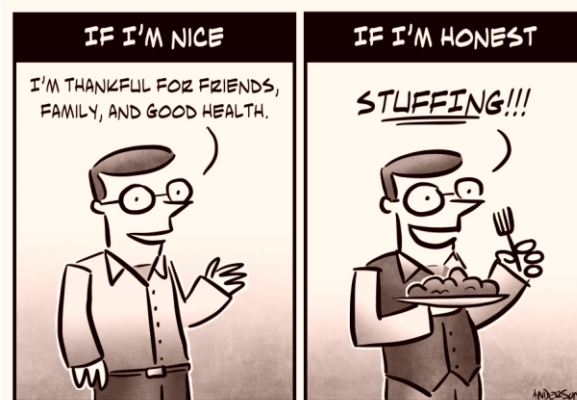
Loss is difficult enough without coupling the holiday season with a season of grief. If this year brings with it an especially weighted feeling for you, know that you reserve the right to skip traditions, no matter how beloved. Now is certainly not the time to feel pressured by guilt into setting a beautiful table or carving a giant turkey. Now is exactly the time to escape all the holiday-have to, for some you time to process the grief of having lost a loved one.

Holidays by and large depress many people as it is. For some, adding grief to an already stressful time of year can be a recipe for disaster. Perhaps creating some new traditions is

just the thing to lighten the load. This is by no means a suggestion to distract yourself, as grief is a very necessary process of everyone's journey. This is merely the proposal to do things a little differently than visiting familiar places you may not be ready to go emotionally. If being around people feels like a burden

right now, there is nothing wrong with saying no thank you, or even cancelling plans you've already made. Often people mean well when you're going through the pain of having lost a loved one, they simply have no idea what you're feeling. Deciding to get up on Thanksgiving morning and skip focusing on the meal may be just what you need to do. If you are usually the one doing the cooking, it may be an especially perfect time to do just the opposite. Going for a walk or a run by yourself may create a desire to do it regularly, and you can always cook next year, if you decide you are back in action.

If you dread the thought of following your tradition of being head chef on Thanksgiving,



NOVEMBER
2020



continued...

“Welcome sweet November, the season of senses and my favorite month of all.”

— Gregory F. Lenz



...continued from front

perhaps this is the year to simply be someone else’s guest. If you take your own car, you can leave whenever you feel overwhelmed. If you go with someone else, be sure they understand you may not want to stay as long as some might expect.

If the idea of celebrating Thanksgiving makes you want to hide altogether, the options of alternative things you can do are endless. Many people do not realize movie theaters might be open on this holiday. If you feel like a day of sitting alone in the dark with a tub of popcorn would serve you better than sitting around a table full of people*, by all means get a ticket and spend the day in a different world, maybe even more than one. Remember that no one knows you better than you do, and it’s perfectly fine to turn down invitations meant to rescue you from being alone.

Conversely, if you dread the idea of being alone, be sure to let someone you trust know that you would be open to an invitation to someone else’s table this year. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. No matter what anyone says, you need to do what your gut tells you will work. Even if you do decide to be around people, there is no law that says you have to be the life of the party (even if you always have a joke at the ready). People will try to understand, and sometimes no matter how hard they try, they will still do the opposite of what you’d like. Right now it’s more important to think about what you need than to worry about what others think. No matter what you choose, it’s your holiday, to celebrate, enjoy, or ignore. Please remember to be kind to yourself in this season of grief.

*** NOTE: Chapters article content does not necessarily take into account the current Covid-19 pandemic. Please use caution when gathering with friends and family, maintain proper social distancing and follow state and local mask mandates.**

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TIME OUT



Andrew Wyeth, November First, 1950, watercolor on paper mounted on paperboard, Smithsonian American Art Museum

• Birthstone: Topaz • Flower: Chrysanthemum

• • •

November by Alice Cary

The leaves are fading and falling,
The winds are rough and wild,
The birds have ceased their calling,
But let me tell, you my child,

Though day by day, as it closes,
Doth darker and colder grow,
The roots of the bright red roses
Will keep alive in the snow.

And when the Winter is over,
The boughs will get new leaves,
The quail come back to the clover,
And the swallow back to the eaves.

The robin will wear on his bosom
A vest that is bright and new,
And the loveliest way-side blossom
Will shine with the sun and dew.

The leaves to-day are whirling,
The brooks are all dry and dumb,
But let me tell, you my darling,
The Spring will be sure to come.

There must be rough, cold weather,
And winds and rains so wild;
Not all good things together
Come to us here, my child.

So, when some dear joy loses
Its beauteous summer glow,
Think how the roots of the roses
Are kept alive in the snow.

• • •

recipe card

COMFORT FOODS

Turning to your comfort foods when you are grieving is only natural. Take it easy and give yourself a break with a favorite go-to food.

A recent survey lists the following Top 10 Comfort Foods:

- 1) Pizza
- 2) Burgers
- 3) Fried Chicken
- 4) French Fries
- 5) Pasta
- 6) Mac and Cheese
- 7) Grilled Cheese
- 8) Mashed Potatoes
- 9) Chili
- 10) Tomato Soup

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