

THANKFUL VERSUS THANKLESS

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This is the time of the year when many bereaved parents start saying out loud what newly bereaved parents have been thinking for weeks and weeks *I am really dreading the holidays*. And why not? When your grief is so new you haven't had the necessary time to accept life as it is for you now.

On the other hand there are those of us who have had the necessary time and the proper support, who are able to observe the holidays in a less painful way. We have kept some of those old traditions that warm our hearts and thrown out those that are either too painful or meaningless now. We have created a life that doesn't include someone who was a vital part of who and what we were. We're different now, doing different things because losing a child forces you into that position if you are to survive in an emotionally healthy way.

The words thankful and thankless follow one another in the dictionary; so close together in a book, yet so far apart in meaning. When you think about it the difference between the two words is full and less. Though those of us who have had more time do like the more newly bereaved, have less in the way of family, but our lives have fullness again because we have learned to be thankful and appreciate that which we have left in the way of people and memories more so than we ever thought possible.

As you approach this Thanksgiving, if you haven't yet been able to make your adjustment, I hope you will feel what you must for now because whatever you are feeling is okay. It isn't until you have reached the place in your grief where the ability to make good choices returns to your life that you can make some important changes in how you approach the holidays.

I hope the transition from thankless to thankful will be soon in coming to you, for that will mean some peace has returned to your life. Above all, I do wish you peace during this holiday season. I wish you more of the same in the New Year.