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person who is no longer there to take his or her accustomed role in the celebration. Special occasions during the first year after the loss are likely to be especially difficult, because each one is the first Thanksgiving, the first birthday, etc., without that person. By thinking ahead, you can help to modify old traditions or start new customs that both honor the past and look to the future. By the time the second year begins, you will have been through each event once already, and the new ways of doing things will probably start feeling more natural and familiar. 

5 Seek professional help. Not everyone will need the expertise of a professional counselor to recover from grief. But if the circumstances of the loss seem to be more than you can handle, or if you are not sure whether what you are experiencing is “normal,” a trained counselor will be able to help you sort out these feelings. He or she will also be able to offer understanding and support in ways that your family and friends, who are locked into their own perspective, may not be able to do. For best results, I recommend looking for a counselor who is specifically trained in dealing with grief and trauma resolution. 

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