

## BAH...Barely Able to Handle the Holidays

Are you **Barely Able to Handle** the Holidays? Perhaps your family has made a choice to limit gift-giving and focus more on the true meaning of Christmas, or maybe you have experienced a loss. If so, a new approach the holidays may be needed.

BAH – the dreaded trio...

When you've experienced the loss of a loved one, some days are especially difficult, and three of them are: Birthdays, Anniversaries, & Holidays. To turn the BAH of the coming holidays into Ho Ho Hope, try wrapping a package.

Plan for these days, prioritize, and practice self-care. Acknowledge the loss and find ways to honor your loved one.

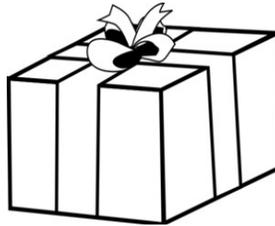
Choose some new traditions, and connect with others who are grieving.

Keep it simple and as stress-free as possible.

Ask for help and any support that you need.

Give what you can to those in need and give yourself a special treat.

Express your feelings in a journal or create a piece of art.



### Fill the gaps:

If this holiday is different than it's been in the past, if there is an emptiness in your heart and under the tree, there are new ways to approach it.

As the holidays draw near...

Give a gift to someone in need: donate to a food pantry, shelter, or cause of your choice. Make cookies or muffins to give to neighbors.

Attend church, a concert, or an event.

Plan a get-together with a friend.

Share time by volunteering or spend time with someone who might be lonely.

### Presence over Presents

*Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before!  
'Maybe Christmas,' he thought, 'doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas ... perhaps ... means a little bit more!'*



## Consider filling the gap under the tree with:

- An advent calendar
- A basket for cards that arrive to represent *the gift of friends and family*
- A flameless candle to represent *the gift of love*
- A beautiful scented oil diffuser to represent *the sights and scents of the holiday*
- A new calendar to represent *the gift of time*
- An ornament made from Christmas carol sheet music to represent *the gift of music*
- A favorite book of cartoons or funny movie on dvd to represent *the gift of laughter*
- Thank you notes to use in the coming year to represent *the gift of gratitude*

To fill the gap at gatherings when there are not gifts to open, add fun activities.

- Find your elf names and get a peppermint when you remember to use them.
- Play games like Christmas candy pass or candy cane games. Try Christmas Taboo or Scattegories.
- Christmas Conversation Bingo – take an m&m for each answer.
- Use colored m&ms to decorate a printed Christmas tree.

Find links to printables at [www.dailyplanit.com/bah-barely-able-to-handle-the-holidays/](http://www.dailyplanit.com/bah-barely-able-to-handle-the-holidays/)

### Have a no-cost or low-cost gift exchange



<p>No cost gift exchange Find, print, &amp; bring in an envelope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a new or favorite recipe</li> <li>• a cartoon</li> <li>• a bookmark</li> <li>• a poem</li> <li>• a quote</li> <li>• a coloring page</li> </ul>	<p>Roll a die. If it is...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Everyone pass left</li> <li>2. Trade with anyone</li> <li>3. Everyone pass right</li> <li>4. Choose 2 others to trade</li> <li>5. Unwrap gift/choose someone else</li> <li>6. Roll again to choose one of the things below to share...</li> </ol>
<p>Ideas for a low cost gift exchange</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a Christmas ornament</li> <li>• a Christmas candle</li> <li>• a Christmas kitchen towel</li> <li>• Christmas candy (candy cane, peanut brittle, chocolate covered cherries, kisses, etc., other chocolate</li> </ul>	<p>What is your favorite?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Favorite book you read this year</li> <li>2. Favorite movie you saw this year</li> <li>3. Favorite Christmas movie</li> <li>4. Favorite Christmas song</li> <li>5. Favorite Christmas candy</li> <li>6. Favorite Christmas cookie</li> </ol>

