



For Immediate Release:

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Coping Tips for Christmas without Mom

Sioux Falls, SD—The generation that didn't want to grow up is facing a new part of life in greater numbers each year: Christmas without mom.

The first Christmas without mom is one of the hardest days of your life, according to Dee Dee Raap, whose book, *Dear Mom: Remembering, Celebrating, Healing*, offers a way of getting through holiday sadness.

“Each year, more Baby Boomers experience Christmas for the first time without their Mom,” Raap said. “It doesn't matter that we're adults. For most of us, moms made Christmas special with baking, cooking, decorating and shopping. When we lose our mom, we have to face our first Christmas without the person who made Christmas special, whatever our age,” she said.

To help deal with Holiday grieving, Raap offers these tips.

“First, think about your favorite ‘mom’ Christmas memory—food, decorations, cookies—the things your mom did to make Christmas special,” she said. “Smell the cookies, visualize the decorations. Use your senses to remember, and dwell for at least a few moments in those memories.”

“Next, celebrate one or more of those traditions by re-creating it and sharing it with your family. Bake the cookies, make the decorations, decorate the table. Pick one or more memories to re-create for your family when they gather for Christmas,” she said. A woman from Iowa told Raap that for the first Christmas without her mom, she and her two sisters each brought the same salad to Christmas dinner. It was the salad their mom made every Christmas.

Third, Raap also encourages narrative healing: writing a letter that captures memories you hold dear. “Writing your mom a letter gives you a place to remember the simple things your mom did to make Christmas special. You could also write a letter to your children, telling them about your favorite holiday memories with Mom. Either way, you will have a memory on paper that you can hold with your hands and clutch to your heart. And that’s a letter that heals,” she said.

Letters written to her late mom are shared in her book, *Dear Mom: Remembering, Celebrating, Healing*, now in its second printing. It is available at local book stores and a sample chapter is on-line at www.DearMomBook.com.

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