



# Holiday Bill of Rights

## **You have the right to say, “Time Out” Anytime You Need**

Time out to let up, blow a little steam, step away from the holidays, have a huddle and start over.

## **You Have the Right to Tell It Like It Is**

When people ask, “how are you?” – You have the right to tell them how you really feel, not just what you think they want to hear. You also have the right to smile and say you are okay if you don’t want to say more, or you realize this person has no ideas what grieving is like and simply wouldn’t understand.

## **You Have the Right to Some “Bah Humbug” Days**

You don’t have to act like Jolly Old St. Nicholas, and it is okay if you don’t feel like singing or hearing holiday songs all day long.

## **You Have the Right to Do Things Differently**

There’s no law that says you must always do the holidays the same way. You can do 10 cards instead of 100, or no cards at all! You can open presents at somebody else’s house. You can do without a tree. You can have pizza instead of turkey. The list of possibilities is endless.

## **You Have the Right to Be Where You Want to Be**

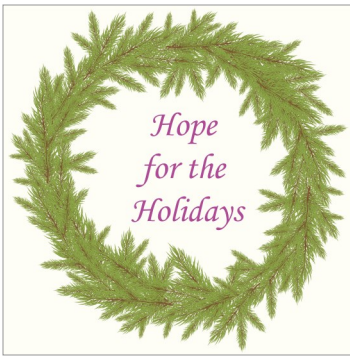
Stay at home or go to your relatives. Go to any city, any state you choose or go on a cruise. Nothing says you have to be up for the holidays and nothing says you must stay home.

## **You Have a Right to Some Fun**

When you have a day that isn’t so bad and you feel like doing something just for fun - then do it! Don’t be afraid of what someone else will say if they see you laughing and having a good time. Laughter is every bit as important as tears.

## **You Have a Right to Change Direction Mid-Stream**

Grief is unpredictable. You may be all ready to go somewhere or do something and then suddenly find yourself feeling overwhelmed. When that happens, it’s okay to change your mind. There’s plenty of time in life to be predictable; exercise your right to make changes when you need to.



## Holiday Bill of Rights

### **You Have the Right to Do Things at Different Times**

Go to your faith community at a different time. Serve your meal at a different time. Give up and go to bed at a different time! Don't be a slave to the holiday clock!

### **You Have a Right to Rest and Solitude**

You don't need to be busy all the time. Take a nap when you need one. Take time to pray, to meditate, and to recharge your spirit; that will do you better than eating yet another great big meal.

### **You Have a Right to Do it Differently Next Year Too**

Just because you change things this year doesn't mean they are now written in stone. Next year you can change it back.

**For more information on how Empath Community Counseling can help, call (727) 523-3451 or visit [EmpathHealth.org](http://EmpathHealth.org).**

