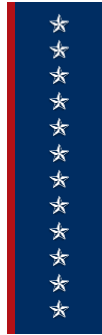




### Navigating Conversations Around Grief and the Holidays

**Rachel Kodanaz**  
*Principle, Embracing Life's Challenges*  
TAPS Advisory Board Member

November 2, 2021



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### Why People Say What They Say

- Want to help
- Mean well
- Are often at a loss of what to do
- Want to protect you
- Have a desire to connect
- Want to 'fix' you



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### How They Interact

- At a loss for what to say
- Don't know how to say what they want to say
- Not sure how to react to a loss
- Have a tendency to minimize the loss
- Often avoid the situation, which creates other challenges
- Tend to compare personal losses



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### What Happens to You, the Griever?



- Angry
- Hurt
- Frustrated
- Guilty
- Feel distant
- Defensive



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***It's not about what they say,  
it's about how you respond.***

- Rachel Kodanaz



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### The Holiday Season

- Joy
- Family
- Giving
- Receiving
- Spending time with others



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### How to Guide a Conversation During the Holidays

- Be true to your needs
- Prepare yourself
- Encourage creation of new traditions
- Embrace old traditions
- Include your loved one
- Avoid being defensive



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### Taking Care of You During the Holidays

- Allow yourself to feel your emotions
- Plan ahead
- Focus on what you have control over
- Honor your memories
- Set boundaries
- Take breaks
- Prepare for a range of emotions
- Express kindness to others




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### Ideas to Think About This Holiday Season



- Celebrate your loved one
- Be true to yourself
- Embrace your personal circle
- Always remember the most important person is YOU!

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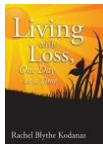
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Personal possessions tell a beautiful story of a person's life regardless of age. But when we find that we have accumulated too much or a loved one passes, it can be overwhelming to figure out what to do with all of these belongings.

**Finding Peace, One Piece at a Time** provides tools for how to trim, repurpose, and redistribute these possessions in a way that can capture and cherish our memories and those of our loved ones so they continue to be with us today and for future generations.



**Living with Loss, One Day at a Time** offers daily encouragement to individuals and families who have lost a loved one or are suffering from any form of loss. The 365 daily lessons and thought-provoking ideas provide hope, optimism, introspection, and self-discovery.



**Grief in the Workplace** offers a wealth of knowledge and experience to support those who have experienced a death or anticipatory loss at work.

The handy and comforting guide provides tools and practical advice enabling employees, Human Resources, and Employee Assistance Programs to embrace and address the loss effectively and compassionately.

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**Upcoming TAPS Institute Programs**

- November 16 Helping Grievors Draw Boundaries**  
*Live Webinar, Noon-1:30 p.m. ET*  
1.5 CEs available for professionals  
Joy Berger, DMA, FT, BCC, MT-BC, Founder/CEO of Composing Life Out of Loss
- January 18 Coping with Loss When Death is Stigmatized**  
*Live Webinar, Noon-1:00 p.m. ET*  
Kenneth J. Doka, PhD, MDiv, TAPS Advisory Board
- January 25 Sibling Loss**  
*Live Webinar, Noon-1:30 p.m. ET*  
1.5 CEs available for professionals  
Heidi Horsley, PsyD, LMSW, MS, Founder/Executive Director, Open to Hope Foundation

Visit [taps.org/institute](https://taps.org/institute) to learn more and RSVP!



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**About the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing®**

Launched in March 2018 through an alliance with HFA, the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing® serves as a resource and training center, providing programs for both professionals working in the field of grief and loss and the public.



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