
THE GRIEVER'S HOLIDAY BILL OF RIGHTS

1. You have the right to say **“TIME OUT!”** anytime you need to. Time out to let up, blow a little steam, step away from the holidays, have a “huddle,” and start over.

2. 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 they want to hear. (P.S. You also have the right to smile and say you’re fine because telling them how you really feel isn’t worth your time – some people will never understand.)

3. You have the right to **SOME ‘BAH HUMBUG’ DAYS**. You don’t have to be “Jolly Old St. Nicholas” all the time. You are not a bad person just because you don’t feel like singing Christmas carols all day.

4. You have the right to **DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY**. There’s no law that says you must always do Christmas 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 things you can change to make it easier for you is endless.

5. You have the right to **BE WHERE YOU WANT TO BE**. Be at home or the relatives. Be in any city or state you choose! And remember, **NOBODY SAID YOU HAVE TO HAVE SNOW TO HAVE CHRISTMAS**. There is no law that says you must stay home!

6. You have the 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 will say if they see you laughing and having a good time. Laughter is every bit as important as tears.

7. You have the right to **CHANGE DIRECTIONS MID-STEAM**. Holiday grief is unpredictable. You may be all ready to go somewhere or do something and suddenly be 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 change when you need to.

8. You have the right to **DO THINGS AT DIFFERENT TIMES**. Go to church, open presents, serve meals, and even go to bed at a different time. Don’t be a slave to the holiday clock.

9. You have the right to **REST, PEACE AND SOLITUDE**. You don’t need to be busy all the time. Take a nap when you need one. Take the time to pray or to meditate, to recharge your spirit and body. It may do you much more good than eating another huge meal!

10. You have the right **TO DO IT ALL DIFFERENT AGAIN NEXT YEAR**. Just because you might’ve changed things this year doesn’t mean you can’t change them back to the way they were or even try more new things.

Adopted from Bruce H. Conley