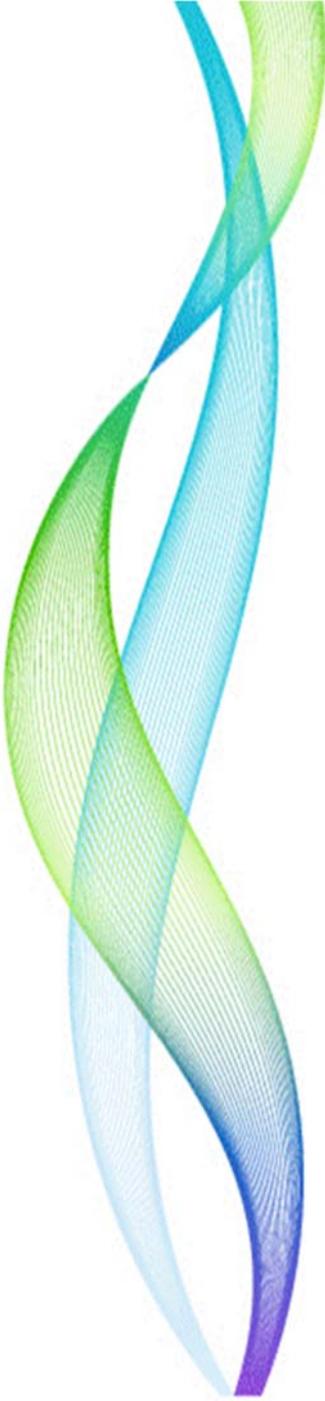


December 2015

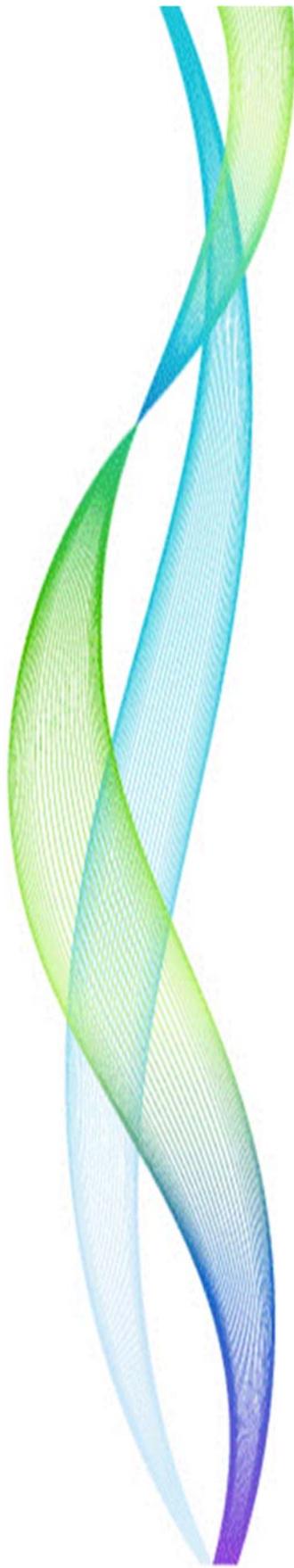
## Focus: Holiday Survival Guide for the Newly Single



Holidays can be tough, especially for the newly single. Whether your solo status was a long time coming, or you're suddenly in shock to be hanging up just one stocking this year (for the cat)--there's something about the holidays that can seem particularly lonely. According to Insights' psychotherapist **Suzanne Johndrow Feiler**, specializing in women's issues including transition, "Expectations about how things are supposed to be can fuel unhappiness and dissatisfaction in our daily lives and even more so during the holidays. We all have idealized notions of what these joyful celebrations of peace and togetherness are *supposed* to be like. Reality, however, has other plans, and they are typically more complicated and less perfect than Martha Stewart or Hallmark has encouraged you to strive for."

Feiler also says that disappointment, resentment and loneliness tend to fill the gap where expectations and reality don't meet. Here are some tips for getting through the holidays and into the New Year all by your grown-up, lovely self:

- Try simple acceptance. Meeting yourself where you really are at this moment in your life and acknowledging the truth of it can be very freeing. *This is the way it really is right now, and that's ok.* Its not romantic, not Christmas card perfect, perhaps, but it can be more peaceful than you anticipated.
- Do something different. If you and your partner hosted an annual cookie making party for ten years in a row, it's probably best not to try duplicating it without him or her—at least not yet. Switch things up and consider changing the scenery, too. Why not ask friends to meet you instead for tea or cocktails at a beautiful hotel lobby or restaurant you haven't tried yet?
- If you're already feeling down, don't make it worse by abusing your body. Take good physical care of yourself by eating healthfully, drinking alcohol in moderation and getting plenty of fresh air, exercise and rest.



For more information on women's issues including transition, contact therapist Suzanne Feiler at [sfeiler@insightstherapy.com](mailto:sfeiler@insightstherapy.com).

**Reconnect:** Gift Giving (when gifts aren't necessary)

If you've been in a relationship with your partner for several years, chances are you're running out of gift ideas. You may also be fortunate or practical enough to not *need or want* anything. But that doesn't mean you have to eliminate thoughtfulness altogether. It feels nice when your significant other shows you he or she is thinking of you and vice versa. Plan a special (surprise) dinner at your favorite restaurant. Have her tennis racquet restrung. Take his car in for service that he hasn't had time to schedule for himself. Give your partner the gift of your thoughtfulness.

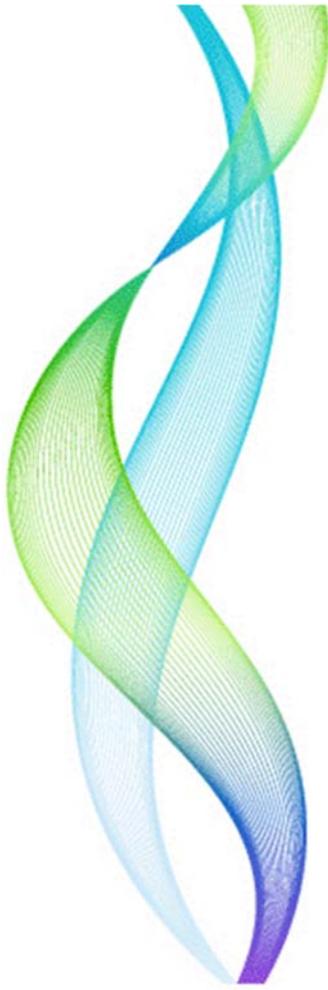
**Bibliotherapy:** *Year of Yes: How to Dance It Out, Stand In the Sun and Be Your Own Person* by Shonda Rhimes

It would be easy to assume that the mega-talented creator of *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal* and executive producer of *How to Get Away with Murder* would be simply too busy to attend parties or make public appearances. But in this poignant memoir we learn that Rhimes was actually a terrified introvert, burying herself in work and parenting while comforting herself with food. And then, on Thanksgiving 2013, Rhimes' sister muttered something that was both a wake up and a call to arms: *You never say yes to anything*. Rhimes' naturally competitive response was to say YES to everything that scared her for one year, including taking charge of her health and incorporating more play time—learning to explore, empower, applaud, and love her truest self along the way. --excerpt from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**Time-Out:** Getting Kids to Help Around the House

*“So little is expected of kids that...Their incompetence begets exasperation, which results in still less being asked of them.”* -- Elizabeth Kolbert in *“Spoiled Rotten: Why Do Kids Rule the Roost?”* originally published in the *New Yorker*, July 2, 2012

Does this scenario sound familiar? Do you often find yourself thinking, “It’s easier to do things myself, rather than trying to get my kids to help”? While it’s true that teaching to any age level initially takes time, the results are more than worth it. For younger children, try giving them a chore and working with them on it. Break tasks into smaller steps and help them master each one. Older kids can be given lists to check off in exchange for technology time (not as a reward for doing what he should be doing but instead, treating the chore as a priority). Ignore whining (they will want to whine) and avoid nagging (you will be tempted to



nag); instead, post a written routine that includes each family member's responsibilities as a constant, visual reminder.

**Self Care Strategies: Sneak Out for a Movie**

When was the last time you saw a good movie at the theatre? One that didn't involve Disney or teen celebrities? We know this is a busy time for everyone but don't forget to balance work and family obligations with a little bit of fun. How about a matinee during your lunch break? There are several area theatres that serve real food in cozy recliners. Or maybe you could even nap, just for a little while.

**Take Two: Truth**

Based on the book *Truth and Duty* by Mary Mapes and in the vein of *All The President's Men* and *The Insider*, this is the incredible true story of Mapes, an award-winning CBS News Journalist and Dan Rather's producer, who broke the Abu-Ghraib prison abuse story, among others. Starring Cate Blanchett and Robert Redford. – excerpt from [www.moviefone.com](http://www.moviefone.com)

**Our Time is Up:** Stayed tuned for our January issue...