Twitter Thread by Niamh Fitzpatrick

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Thread: 1/10

What surviving my first bereaved Christmas taught me about handling Christmas in a pandemic:

Mindset: Christmas is nostalgia, tradition, togetherness. But it's also just one day. When things get tough tomorrow, remember this is a Friday & a big chicken dinner.

2/10

Expectations: Let yourself feel what you feel. It is beyond sh*t that people will be alone & that families are separated this Christmas. You don't have to pretend. It's ok to be sad, angry, resentful. Let yourself feel what you feel without expectation to feel otherwise.

3/10

No guilt: It's also ok to have fun on the day. To laugh, smile & enjoy lovely moments even though you miss a relative who can't be with you in order to keep safe from the virus. No guilt. Allow those moments. For you can hold both sadness & joy at the same time.

4/10

Chunk it down: This Christmas Day may feel very long when you're lonely for loved ones who are in another house. Think of the day in sections. Have a focus for each section. Focus only on the section in front of you. Breakfast. Walk. Video call loved ones. Dinner. Movie.

5/10

Allow for differences: Not everyone handles things the same, so don't judge others if they're dealing with the day differently to you tomorrow. Let everyone get through this strangest Christmas Day the best they can. Let everyone find their own way.

6/10

Be a team: At the same time, remember to help one another, to bring everyone safely through this most awful time. To notice loved ones struggling & be there with them in their sorrow at what this wretched virus has robbed from us all. Leave no-one behind in their pain.

7/10

Remember your capabilities: Human beings are IMMENSE. You have gotten through every terrifying, tough, cruel, savage, exhausting day of this God-awful relentless year. You can get through this day too.

8/10

Ask for help: If you need to talk, be sure to reach out to someone. Not to "fix" you. Just to hear you. Whether it's a friend or a helpline, if the need to talk bubbles up inside you tomorrow, don't ignore it. Share your feelings & thoughts, it will help you bear the load.

9/10

Hope: When you're bereaved, hope is hard that first Christmas. But in this pandemic, hope is present. Hope that one day we will live again. That we will be with the ones we love on days like Christmas Day. The big days & the little days shared. Hold that hope.

10/10

Love: Missing loved ones is truly awful. But it means that you love & are loved. If love can survive death, it can survive distance. Focus on the love. Find ways to express it this Christmas Day. Don't let Covid take that from you. A safe & peaceful Christmas to all.■