

The Griever's Holiday Bill of Rights

1. You have a right to say **TIME OUT!** Any time you need it. Time to let up, blow a little steam, step away from the holidays, have a “huddle,” and start over.
2. You have a 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 anyway).
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 is 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 a pizza instead of turkey! The list is endless...
5. You have the right to **BE WHERE YOU WANT TO BE.** Be at home or with the relatives. Be in any city, any state you choose! (So what if you don't have snow during the holidays!). There's no law that says you must stay home.
6. 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!
7. You have a right to **CHANGE DIRECTION IN MID-STREAM.** 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 a right to **DO THINGS AT DIFFERENT TIMES.** Go to church at a different time. Open presents 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.
9. You have a right to **REST, PEACE, and SOLITUDE.** You don't have to be busy all the time. Take a nap whenever you need one. Take time to pray and to mediate, to recharge your spirit.
10. You have the right to **DO IT ALL DIFFERENTLY AGAIN NEXT YEAR.** Just because you change things one year—you know, try something different—does not mean you have written it in stone. Next year you can always change it back or do it yet another new way.

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