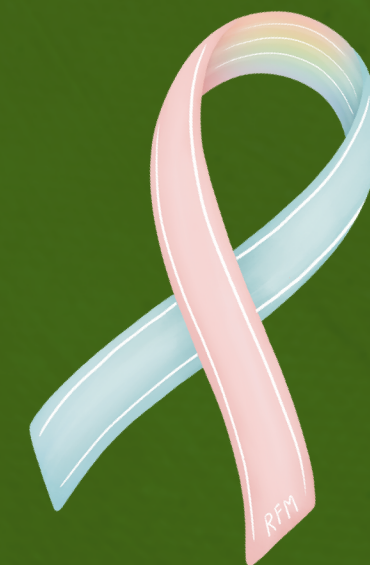
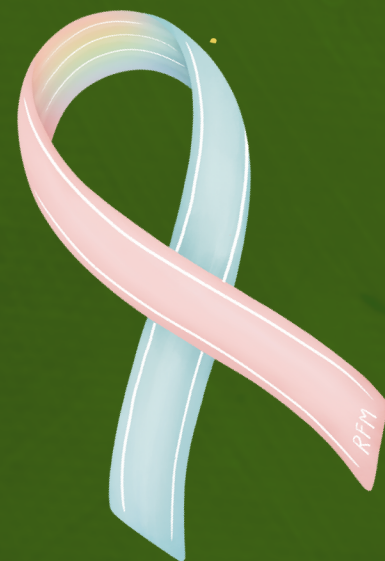
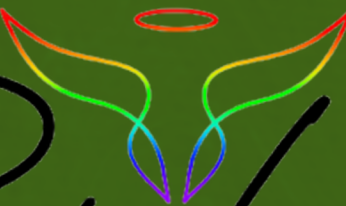


Deck the Halls

...or don't

Boundaries




Rainbows
for Makenna

*The holidays are here, but they aren't
merry and bright anymore.*

Let's address the obvious: holidays are supposed to be filled with joy; but your baby is dead and you are heartbroken.

* *Setting boundaries and sticking to them*

Why are boundaries important?

- Protect your heart, your energy, and your peace
- They give you control when everything else feels out of control
- They help reduce resentment and burnout
- You're allowing yourself to honor your baby in ways that feel right for *you*

**Setting boundaries and sticking to them*

Identifying what you need: Ask yourself the following questions:

1. What events/traditions feel unbearable?
2. Are there any events/traditions that feel comfortable and worth keeping?
3. How much time do I want to spend around other people?
4. How will this event/tradition make me feel?
5. How will I feel if I skip this event/tradition?

* *Setting boundaries and sticking to them*

Communicating these boundaries with family:

- “Thank you for including us. This year is especially hard, and unfortunately we aren’t going to be able to attend.”
- “Thank you for the invite! We will be there, but will need to head out a little early this year.”
- “We won’t be able to participate in a gift exchange this year, thank you for understanding.”
- “This holiday season is very difficult for us, so we won’t be able to attend. But we send our love.”

*tip: keep communications short without over-explaining. The more information you offer, the more people believe they can debate with you or try to convince you.

* *Setting boundaries and sticking to them*

Communicating these boundaries with family:

- “Thank you for the invite, but I don’t have the capacity to join right now”.
- “If I get quiet or step away, please know it is not about you and just how I need to take care of myself right now”.
- “Certain topics of conversation are hard for me right now, please don’t be offended if I need to step away”.
- “I can stop by for a short visit, but I can’t stay long”.

*tip: keep communications short without over-explaining. The more information you offer, the more people believe they can debate with you or try to convince you.

* *Setting boundaries and sticking to them*

Holding firm when the inevitable pushback comes:

- Repeat your boundary, calmly but firmly.
- “I understand you want us there, but our answer is still no.”
- Remember that other people’s disappointment is not your responsibility.
- If guilt kicks in remind yourself:
 1. People who matter will respect your boundaries.
 2. Keeping your peace and respecting your own boundaries, honors your baby.
 3. You don’t owe anyone holiday cheer at your own expense.

* *Setting boundaries and sticking to them*

Permission slips:

- It is okay to say no.
- It is okay to skip.
- It is okay to change your mind.
- It is okay to leave early.
- It is okay to celebrate differently.
- It is okay to protect your peace.