



*“Blessed is the season
which engages the
whole world in a
conspiracy of love.”*

— Hamilton Write Mabie —

December 2024 Newsletter

This month's *Unsung Hero* is.... **Greg Pelts**



-Greg Pelts is the Director of the Veterans & Military Resource Center.

-Greg started in this position January 2022.

-“What I love about this role is the powerful conversations I have with student veterans & the fact that so many feel comfortable to stick their head in the door and share. This center is critical on campus. If we want to provide a touch point for veterans and our military students, it makes sense to have this space. Our center is the second largest in the state, following the U of A. I am proud of what we have to offer, and desire to not only serve our students, but the entire campus population as well.”

-He concluded the interview by stating "I'm proud of UCA for what it's doing for its Veterans and military students."

“Greg's upbeat and caring approach has established the relocated Veterans and Military Resource Center (VMRC) as a safe and supportive space for our campus veterans. Greg's dedication to working with students and area vets has forged strong connections between UCA's student veteran community and the larger Arkansas veteran population, as evidenced by frequent visits from community vets to the VMRC. Hiding under that serious "boots and tucked-in shirt" facade, Greg Pelts has a heart of gold and an infectious sense of camaraderie and good will, and our student veterans are fortunate to have him. We all are.” *Julia Winden Fey*

How to Survive the Holidays When You're Grieving

Jessica Fein - Psychology Today

The holiday season can feel like a punishment when you're grieving. So how can you muster up the strength to face the onslaught of good cheer and maybe even find a smile or two during the holidays?

- 1. Forgo Tradition:** The presence of your person's absence can be too much to bear. So shake things up. Move from a seated meal in the dining room to a buffet in the den. Get Chinese food or order pizza instead of more traditional fare. Make it deliberately different.
- 2. Have an Exit Plan:** If you're going to somebody else's home, figure out ahead of time how to leave if things feel too tough. Lean on a trusted friend to be your excuse if you need to take off early. And don't feel guilty if you don't go at all. Prioritize what you need this year, not what others might expect from you.
- 3. Volunteer:** Helping somebody else is a great way to connect with others and find meaning during a time when you're quite likely feeling isolated. You might even think of volunteering as a way to honor the person you're missing.
- 4. Talk to Somebody:** Acknowledge that this year will likely feel different and confide in a friend, a family member, a therapist, or someone you meet online in your grief group.
- 5. Take Care of Yourself:** This is the year to be selfish. What do you want or need? Go on a vacation. Get a massage. Spend the day reading in bed. And when other people ask if there's anything they can do, say "Yes." Enlist a friend to do your shopping for you or take your kids to the movies so you can have time to yourself.
- 6. Expect the Unexpected:** Holidays bring up a lot of emotions under the best of circumstances, which these definitely are not. Give yourself grace to feel whatever you're feeling.
- 7. Don't Feel Guilty if You Have a Good Time:** If you find that the holidays are just what you needed to restore routine or connect with loved ones or even simply to distract yourself, don't feel guilty. You deserve every bit of joy, even when you're mourning.

New UCA Podcast Available Now

Need a fun Podcast to listen to while cleaning, walking, or traveling?

Check out *Bear in Mind* with Charlotte Strickland and Leigh Ann DenHartog!

They discuss the mindset of a leader and have a great time while sharing!

Listen to this past week's session on the growth mindset!

And watch for the December session on Emotional Intelligence!

Available on the HR website under TRAINING

<https://uca.edu/hr/protectedcontent/training/podcast/>