



# Navigating Fasting Holidays: A Support Guide for Loved Ones

Faith-based holidays, fasting periods and spiritual observances can be deeply meaningful, and they can also bring unique challenges for individuals in recovery from an eating disorder. This guide includes practical tips and strategies to help loved ones better understand these challenges and provide meaningful support. Fill it out and share with loved ones to start conversations and gently guide them in offering the support you need.

## WAYS TO SUPPORT ME IN NAVIGATING FAITH & FASTING

- Respect that my recovery may require modifying or not participating in fasting
- Avoid pressuring me to explain or justify my choices
- Support alternative spiritual practices (prayer, service, reflection, charity, meditation)
- Understand that health-based exemptions exist in faith traditions
- Help me communicate boundaries with faith leaders or family, if needed

### SUPPORT MY SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

- Pray with me or for me (if welcomed)
- Sit with me during difficult moments without trying to “fix” them
- Remind me that my worth is not defined by food, fasting or discipline
- Help me stay connected to faith in non-food-focused ways
- Validate that choosing recovery is not a spiritual failure

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### KINDLY AVOID:

- Using faith or scripture to pressure fasting
- Framing eating as a lack of discipline, devotion or faith
- Comparing my spiritual practice to others’
- Suggesting that recovery is “less faithful”
- Making moral judgments about eating during fasting periods

“Thank you for supporting me as I navigate recovery alongside my faith. Your understanding, flexibility and compassion help create a space where healing and spirituality can coexist. Together, we can honor both my health and my beliefs.”

## WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT ME IN GENERAL

### HELP ME SET AND HOLD BOUNDARIES

- Steer conversations with family members toward different topics if food or body size comes up
- Stand up for me by taking up space and setting boundaries on my behalf so I can focus my energy on my own well-being/experience

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### CHECK IN WITH ME

- Here's how you can check in with me:
  - Verbally check in
  - Give me a hug
  - Stand by me
  - Allow me space to cry or share emotions
  - Remind me to be gentle with myself
  - Say my mantra to me
    - Here is my mantra:

---

---

### HELP ME MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT EATING SCHEDULE

- Make sure I have (check all that apply):
  - Breakfast, lunch, dinner
  - Three meals and three snacks
  - \_\_\_\_ meals and \_\_\_\_ snacks
  - Help with plating my food
  - Your companionship while I eat

### SUPPORT MY COPING SKILLS

- Utilizing fidget toys
- Calling or texting a supportive friend/family member
- Fact checking
- Journaling
- Sharing gratitude (verbally or written)
- Practicing meditation or mindfulness

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



“At the heart of both faith and recovery is the same idea:  
Our bodies are worthy and deserving of care.”