

Supporting Your Wellbeing This Holiday Season

'Tis the Season: How to Survive the Holidays

The holiday season can bring out a wide array of emotions including both joy and stress. Learn healthy coping skills to help you take on the holiday season.

To watch this webinar, visit www.supportlinc.com.

Locate the What's on Your Mind? search bar and enter 'holiday stress'. Click on the Training tab.

Prioritizing the health and safety of you and your loved ones due to COVID-19 is making this holiday season unlike any other. Limited gatherings, changes to travel plans or even the cancellation of favorite holiday customs and traditions only add to the disappointment this pandemic has caused in 2020.

To better cope with holiday stressors, it's important to take care of yourself mentally, physically and emotionally. These suggestions can help you make the best of this season:

1. Take Care of Yourself

Eating healthy, getting regular exercise and making sure to get the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep can boost your energy, mood and resiliency. Activities such as meditation, practicing mindfulness and journaling can also help you to de-stress and relax.

2. Set Expectations

Discuss with loved ones which aspects of your usual festivities are the most important. Focusing on the parts of the holidays that you enjoy – being together, making and sharing memories – can help you brainstorm new and creative ways to experience those joyful moments even as your plans change.

3. Stick to a Budget

Limit your holiday spending this year to avoid any extra financial strain. Consider exchanging homemade cards, organizing a gift exchange or simplifying your decorations to help you avoid feeling like you're breaking the bank.

4. Connect and Catch Up

Though you may not be able to celebrate in-person, you can still reach out and connect with your family and friends throughout the season. Make a call, start a text message exchange or post to social

media. You can also plan socially distant get-togethers such as online game nights, virtual dinners or a night of video caroling where everyone can be involved.

5. Acknowledge the Hard

When faced with challenging circumstances, it's important to remember that there is no right or wrong way to react. Sharing your feelings and personal experiences with a trusted friend, family member or even coworker can help you to ease your mental and emotional concerns while boosting your ability to cope.

For in-the-moment support from SupportLinc, call 1-888-881-LINC (5462) or visit www.supportlinc.com.

The Holiday Toolkit

This easy-to-navigate resource offers you guidance and tools to make the most of the season.

To find this toolkit, visit www.supportlinc.com.

Locate the What's on Your Mind? search bar and enter 'toolkit'. Click on the Toolkit tab to access.

Five Steps to Calm Anxious Thoughts

Small doses of uncertainty are natural and unavoidable, particularly in the midst of the pandemic. Using the techniques below can help you cope with and redirect anxious thoughts to keep yourself from feeling overwhelmed.

1. Avoid Your Triggers.

Pay attention to what makes your mind start racing and steer clear of those situations and activities. For example, allow yourself only 10 to 20 minutes each morning and evening to look at the news. If you feel extra anxious after scrolling through social media, limit your time or stop using it altogether.

2. See It and Stop It.

If you sense that worries are starting to dominate your thoughts, imagine a light switch turned to "off," a stop sign, or anything else that tells you these types of thoughts are off limits.

3. Use Positive Affirmations to Re-Center.

Keep motivational reading material at hand or repeat a phrase, such as "Be at peace," to help you calm your mind.

4. Step Back and Take a Break.

Disconnect for a few minutes. Close your laptop and set your email and phone to "do not disturb". Taking a short walk, completing a relaxation meditation or spending some time writing in a journal are quick and easy ways to help you regroup.

5. Be Kind Yourself.

Increased levels of stress are common in uncertain times. Seek out joy to create a sense of balance. Reach out to a friend for a reassuring conversation, read a book by your favorite author for comfort or binge watch a new show for some distraction.

Source: <https://www.wellmark.com/blue/healthy-living/calm-your-anxious-mind-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>