



December is National Stress-Free Family Holidays Month

Focus on joy for happier holidays

The holiday season is a time for celebration, but it can also cause feelings of stress, grief, anxiety and sadness. Whether it's feeling pressured to create the perfect holiday, navigating family dynamics or dealing with loneliness and/or social anxiety, this time of year can be challenging.

Here are five tips to help you embrace the holiday season with joy and create moments of happiness:

- 1 Check in with yourself:** Acknowledging and validating your feelings can help you address negative emotions and make space for positive ones. Taking a step back ensures you don't become overwhelmed.
- 2 Engage in self-care activities:** Prioritizing activities that enhance your wellbeing, such as exercise, adequate sleep, nutritious food, reading or a relaxing bath can help you find moments of joy during the holiday busyness.
- 3 Volunteer and connect:** Helping others can be a powerful way to lift your spirits. Volunteering at events like food, toy and winter clothing drives can help you meet new people, overcome feelings of loneliness and increase your overall positivity and health.
- 4 Create meaningful traditions:** Establishing new ways to celebrate can bring comfort and joy. Whether it's celebrating at a different location, preparing a special dish or honoring the memory of a loved one, creating unique memories can foster a positive outlook.
- 5 Seek professional support:** If you find yourself struggling, therapists and counselors can provide valuable tools to help you manage emotions, family trauma or stress and cope with grief.

It's normal to experience a range of emotions during the holidays. By prioritizing your mental health, embracing new traditions and taking care of yourself, you can focus on moments of joy.



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