



MENTAL HEALTH & THE HOLIDAY SEASON



With the holiday season upon us, it's essential to be mindful of managing your mental health. Although the holidays can be a joy-filled season, it can also be stressful and challenging, and feeling a bit blue during this time is perfectly normal. In addition to the inevitable complexities of family relationships, you may be feeling the pressures of holiday shopping, gift and travel expenses, the stress of hosting or managing a packed calendar of holiday events, etc.

The American Psychiatric Association has put together **7 Coping Strategies** to help you bolster your mental health during this hectic time:

- **Practice Mindfulness and Meditation** – try using a mindfulness app to help you get started
- **Prevent Burnout** – it's OK to say No to situations that stress you out
- **Take a Break** – remove yourself from escalating situations that may turn into a family feud
- **Get Some Fresh Air and Sunlight** – this can help you relax and lift your mood
- **If You're in Therapy, Stay in Therapy** – keep any regularly scheduled therapy a priority
- **Grief and Loss** – try celebrating a missed loved one, instead of trying to avoid your grief
- **Financial Stress** – avoid overspending and put the focus on celebrating

The complete article can be found [here](#).

Above all else, remember to be kind to yourself and put your own mental and physical well-being first. Maintain healthy habits such as eating right, exercising regularly, getting plenty of sleep, and making time for yourself. And although feeling stressed and anxious are normal during this time of year, if these feelings are more than you can manage on your own, you are NOT alone. The **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress and provides prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones. A link to their website with more information can be found [here](#).

Additional resources are available and can be found through the links below:

- **The New Jersey's Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS):**
<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/home/>
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness:**
<https://www.nami.org/Home>
- **Mental Health First Aid:**
<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2021/11/five-ways-to-take-care-of-your-mental-health-this-holiday-season/>
- **Mayo Clinic Health System:**
<https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/coping-with-holiday-stress-keeping-our-expectations-realistic>