

# 7 TIPS FOR MANAGING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

*The holiday season and all of its demands can cause increased stress. Here are seven practical tips to avoid struggling through the season.*

## **Stick to a routine.**

Consistency is important for your physical and mental health and can be soothing for you & your family.

## **If you break a routine, be intentional.**

Follow the broad strokes of a schedule, but you can always add special treats — extra screen time or a slightly later bedtime for kids. If breaking a routine, communicate plans clearly.

## **Schedule some downtime.**

If running around during the holidays has you feeling frazzled, try to schedule more downtime. You will be more pleasant and present if you take care of yourself.

## **Less is more.**

Consider making some changes to your holiday traditions that not only ease your load, but that could also be a hit with the rest of the family.

## **Remember, it's the thought that counts.**

Financial pressure is a huge source of stress during the holidays. Consider giving smaller, more sentimental gifts rather than expensive purchases.

## **Focus on doing nice things for others.**

Think about visiting a nursing home or donating toys as a way to create positive holiday experiences. It will make your family more appreciative of all they have.

## **Change it up.**

For families coping with loss during the holidays, try changing up your holiday routines. If you know you can't get through the same traditions without a loved one, do something different — start a new tradition.

## **Minimize the use of substances that impact mood.**

Having a drink or two with friends may be OK, but remember not to overdo it. Using substances to manage stress isn't a long-term solution. Finding simple ways to cope and including down time in your life are more effective in managing stress and reducing emotional vulnerability.

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## **Help is within reach**

You don't have to do it all alone. It's normal to struggle with anxiety or depression during the holidays, and new telehealth options make therapy more accessible than ever before.