

Mental Health for the Holidays

Hi Jerica,

As we enter the holiday season, it's important to ensure that your mental health makes it through to the other side! While some folks look forward to the holidays – the get togethers, gift giving and traditions; others find themselves anxious, depressed, or stressed.

If you find yourself - and/or your clients - more of the latter, here are tips to promote mental health for the holiday season:

1. Manage your expectations

Perhaps you find it's the 'same thing' every year, with a certain family member at the holiday get together, or you know you get a little sad and lonely. If you manage your expectations, you can hopefully escape any mental road bumps.

Know what's ahead, don't expect an 'ideal' situation, and don't set yourself up to dwell on negative emotions.

2. Have a plan

Have distractions ready, a plan in place, and decide on what's important to you during the holidays. If you don't want to be alone, don't! Grab Chinese take-out or try a new recipe at home with a friend, have a movie marathon, or look into volunteer opportunities if you want to get out of the house.

Usually pressured to stay longer than you want at a gathering or have to choose between commitments? Let it be known you have other engagements to tend to (which could be you, all cozy at home) or just say no. Avoid spreading yourself too thin and the burnout that comes along with it!

Having a plan will give you a greater sense of control, and by deciding what's important to you ahead of time, you can make your own meaning of the holidays.

3. Don't drive yourself crazy - or broke - over gifts

Don't get caught in the consumerism trap; there are tons of things you can make at home to show your loved ones that you care about them. Kind words or a nice card always make a great gift!

If you're someone with a long list of people you'd like to get something for, make cookies, propose a gift exchange, or organize a group outing instead. Be honest with yourself about your finances, and set a budget for yourself. If you don't want to do anything, don't.

4. Keep up healthy habits

Overindulging in snacks and abandoning routines over the holidays might leave you feeling like you have to start all over once they've passed. Choose smaller portions at get togethers, bring a healthier dish option, or make better decisions when choosing from a spread.

Maybe encourage others to join you in a walking routine, which can be a fun way to spend time with friends and relatives.

5. Don't overindulge in alcohol

If you know you can get sad around the holidays, overindulging in alcohol will only make it worse. Switch over to seltzers, call it a night at a reasonable hour, and practice self-control. And don't drink and drive, no matter what!

Here at PIMSY, we want everyone to have a safe holiday season and look forward to all the blessings & possibilities of 2022! If you feel like you (and/or your clients) need someone to talk to this holiday season, check out these resources:

// National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

// Crisis Text Line: Text "MHA" to 741-741 for free, confidential text message support, 24/7

// [Warmlines](#)

// [Mental Health American \(MHA\) On Inspire](#)

// [Find Tools That Help](#)

In these intense times, we could all use some encouragement & positivity:



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Smiles
TODAY

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BRITTANY I., OFFICE MANAGER

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