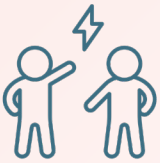
TURNING 12 HOLIDAY *STRESSORS* INTO *JOY*

The holiday season is often described as "the most wonderful time of the year." While it can come with many positives, like cozy movie marathons and awe-inspiring lights, we can't deny that it can come with quite a bit of stress as well. That stress can affect your overall mental health and make it difficult to enjoy the festivities.

Whether your distress only comes around during the fall and winter seasons, or you have a mental health diagnosis that impacts your well-being year-round, learning how to manager your stressors can help you turn them into joyous experiences.



FAMILY CONFLICT

When you feel like family conflict is making it hard to enjoy quality time, take a moment to practice gratitude for what value your family brings to your life. You should also know when to give yourself a moment to leave the room to regulate your emotions.

FINANCIAL STRAIN

While it's hard to see spending too much money in a "positive light," set financial boundaries. Be selective about what you spend money on so the reward outweighs the cost.

DIFFICULT OR CHANGING FAMILY DYNAMICS

When you feel like family conflict is making it hard to enjoy quality time, take a moment to practice gratitude for what value your family brings to your life. Know when to give yourself a moment to leave and regulate your emotions.

OVERWHELMING WORKLOAD

To avoid burnout at work during the holidays, try to commend yourself for each task completed and compliment others on their good work.

TRAVEL STRESS

Make the most of your car or plane ride by playing games or doing a relaxing hobby. If you're traveling with others, the journey can be a good time to check in with each other about how you're feeling. Sometimes just naming stress out loud helps.

LONELINESS

If you're experiencing mental health challenges that cause you to withdraw from others, or you're unable to spend time with your loved ones this year, take the time to focus on your self-care. Prioritize doing what makes you happy, which may involve calling someone you care about or going on a solo adventure.

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

GRIEVING A LOSS

If you've experienced a loss that makes your grief feel more overwhelming during the holidays, use the quality time with others to honor the person and share memories. Allow yourself to have your feelings.

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

It's easier said than done, but be kind to yourself. The holiday season doesn't wash away all the realities of our lifestyles. Use positive self-talk to give yourself grace and be proud of yourself.

PRESSURE FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE

If you're currently experiencing a substance use disorder, or you're in recovery, set boundaries with the people you're spending time with. Stand up for yourself and think about your goals for the new year. If you're in treatment, put your learned coping strategies for cravings into practice and call your support system if needed.

OVERCOMMITMENT TO ACTIVITIES

If your schedule is packed with holiday get-togethers and activities that are draining your physical and mental battery, it's important to set boundaries. Allow yourself to say no to plans and prioritize self-care time when needed. If you don't give yourself time to relax and recharge, it can be hard to enjoy the special moments with loved ones.

FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN IN THE NEW YEAR

If the uncertainty of the new year is causing anxiety, try to shift your perspective into a more positive mindset. Instead of worrying about what may go wrong, make a list of the potential opportunities and think about what's in your control.

GIFT-GIVING PRESSURE

Trying to find the "perfect" gift can be physically and emotionally exhausting, especially if you don't have the budget to get what the person might truly want. Try to keep in mind that putting any amount of effort into getting something for someone else will be appreciated by the right person. A gift is always a symbol of your care, no matter what it is.

If you need further support to handle holiday stressors, talking to a therapist can be helpful. If you're experiencing severe mental health distress that's affecting your quality of life, our intensive levels of care at Lightfully may be the support you're looking for.

If you're experiencing a substance use disorder, our Constellation program can connect you with a detox partner to help you through the holidays.

Call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by dialing 988 if you're at risk to yourself or others.

At Lightfully Behavioral Health, we are here to treat the whole person. We recognize that you're more than your diagnosis, and we are here to help you put the pieces back together so that you can become the brightest version of yourself and enjoy the holidays.

Call (866) 860-7812 admissions@ligthfully.com lightfully.com/admissions

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