

# Better You Resilience During the Holidays



The holiday season can bring additional stress in your life. Practicing resilience and self-care can help you handle the holidays in a positive manner.



## What is resilience?

Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; being able to bounce back from adversity and come out in a better place – thriving, not just surviving.

## Reflect on your holiday stress

What causes you the most stress during the holidays?

# Better You Resilience During the Holidays



## Healthy coping behaviors

Try these strategies to help you deal with your holiday stress.

- **Be good to yourself.** Enjoy your solitude, practice self-care, do a hobby you like, learn something new. Do things to enhance your self-esteem.
- **Understand you are not alone.** If you can't be with family during the holidays, use technology to visit with them or be with friends.
- **Get connected.** When you are reaching out to others you don't feel as lonely. Say hello to neighbors, smile, make eye contact, or exchange friendly words.
- **Cultivate gratitude.** Take stock of what you have and take a few moments each day to notice the good things in life.
- **Give to others.** Volunteering your time or talent helps counteract the effects of stress and makes you feel good.
- **Examine your feelings.** Have self-awareness of what you are feeling. If you need to talk to someone, see a therapist, or contact your EAP.



# Better You Resilience During the Holidays

## Manage your time

- 1) **Set priorities and let go of impossible goals.** Take a serious look at your calendar and be realistic about how much you can accomplish. Build in some time for unexpected interruptions.
- 2) **Stop to enjoy the fruits of your labor.** If you just spent a weekend getting your home decorated for the holidays (hopefully with some help from family members), put on some holiday music and enjoy how beautiful everything looks. If you don't, you might feel drained and unappreciated.
- 3) **Pay attention to how your body is feeling and what it is telling you.** Rest when you need it. If you are tired and tense, it will affect your mood and your ability to get things done. Try to keep to your regular sleeping pattern. This is a time when many of us cheat sleep, trying to get everything done, and we can get run down and sick.



## Set an intention for the holidays

Enjoy the company, the atmosphere, the entertainment, the food and the traditions you have for the holidays!



# Better You Resilience During the Holidays

## Ways to increase your resilience

### Build your connections

- **Prioritize relationships.** Whether you go on a weekly date night with your spouse or plan a lunch out with a friend, try to prioritize connecting with people who care about you.
- **Join a group.** Research groups in your area that could offer you support and a sense of purpose or joy when you need it.

### Foster wellness

- **Take care of your body.** Proper nutrition, ample sleep, hydration, and regular exercise can strengthen your body to adapt to stress and reduce the toll of emotions like anxiety or depression.
- **Practice mindfulness.** Whether you journal, meditate, do yoga or pray, think about the positive aspects of your life and recall the things you're grateful for, even during personal trials.
- **Avoid negative outlets.** Focus instead on giving your body resources to manage stress, rather than trying to mask your feelings with alcohol, drugs or other substances.





# Better You Resilience During the Holidays

## Find purpose

- **Help others.** Whether you volunteer with a local homeless shelter or simply support a friend in their own time of need, you can gain a sense of purpose, foster self-worth, and connect with others.
- **Be proactive.** It's important to ask yourself, "What can I do about a problem in my life?" If the problems seem too big to tackle, break them down into manageable pieces.
- **Move toward your goals.** Develop some realistic goals and do something regularly—even if it's a small step—that helps you move forward.



## Embrace healthy thoughts

- **Keep things in perspective.** How you think can play a significant part in how you feel—and how resilient you are when faced with obstacles. You may not be able to change a highly stressful event, but you can change how you interpret and respond to it.
- **Accept change.** Accept that change is a part of life. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances you can change.
- **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** It's hard to be positive when life isn't going your way. An optimistic outlook empowers you to expect that good things will happen to you. Try visualizing what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear.

