

Mental Health During the Holidays - Weekly Tip

For many people, holiday rituals and celebrations with loved ones contribute to [positive wellbeing](#). At the same time, this time of year can be very difficult — stress related to finances and gatherings, pressure to appear joyful and social, feelings of loneliness and grief. 64% of people with [mental illness](#) report that their condition worsens during the holidays. Studies have found higher [alcohol consumption](#) during the holidays and higher [suicide](#) rates on [New Year's Day](#).

Tips for supporting mental wellbeing during the holidays:

1. **Acknowledge your feelings.** Give yourself permission to feel your feelings. Painful emotions are valid and trying to ignore them rarely helps. Talk to a friend, write in a journal, schedule a session with a therapist, scream or cry into your pillow... then do something that you enjoy. And remember you are not alone. Many people find the holidays challenging.
2. **Manage your expectations.** Catch yourself if you start thinking about how the holidays “should” be or what you “should” have accomplished this year. Ask yourself where these expectations come from and if they are realistic.
3. **Connect.** Talk to loved ones you can't see in person on the phone or video chat. Invite someone who doesn't have family in the area to join your celebration. If you are alone, you can think of it as an opportunity to connect with yourself—returning to hobbies you haven't had time to do, learning or trying something new, or planning for the year ahead.
4. **Practice self-care.** Make time for exercise and relaxation. Spend time outdoors. Reflect on good things that happened in the past year. Set boundaries and say no when you need to. You can find more resources and ideas on our [website](#).