



## HOLIDAY SEASON STRESS SURVIVAL TIPS



- Acknowledge your feelings (use deep breathing, grounding skills, or other relaxation techniques to help you calm down).
- Distract yourself by engaging in things that are positive for you (walking, reading, hanging with certain people, etc.).
- Plan ahead; don't overdo.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Eat healthy/exercise.
- Practice communication and listening skills. A sense of connection with others is what can make the holiday season most meaningful.
- Lower your expectations. Keep your expectations of the season realistic with your situation.
- Budget for the holidays. Discuss holiday financial issues as a family.
- Avoid alcohol as drinking can increase anxiety symptoms.
- If driving, do so at off peak times to avoid traffic. Stay off your cell phone unless you can use it hands-free, no texting while driving.
- Have a contact person for support during the holidays. Talk about your feelings.
- Celebrate with others who are without family.
- Give yourself permission to say "No." Set boundaries with people who are toxic.
- If you're socially anxious, limit the time you spend at social events. Make time for the people with whom you feel most comfortable.
- Draw up a list of reasons why you engage in the holiday traditions you enjoy, and then make a list of traditions you don't really enjoy or which seem too burdensome. Just making a simple pros and cons list will remind you that you do have choices. Allow yourself to let go of what you truly don't want to do, or what seems like it's just too much to handle.
- Don't worry about how things should be. There's lots of cultural pressure for the holidays to be a big deal, and for you to feel festive. There's nothing wrong with feeling down during holidays.
- Take control over the holidays rather than them controlling you.

-Finally if things are out of control, and you're unable to function during usual activities, seek professional help.