

Making the Most of the Holidays

Upcoming Online Seminars

12/1/21 – Healthy Living: Strategies to Improve Your Overall Wellbeing

1/1/22 – Work-Life Balance

2/1/22 – Improving Self-Esteem

To watch these online seminars, log in to www.supportlinc.com and click on the 'Monthly Feature' tile or use the 'What's on Your Mind?' search tool.

It's that time of year again. No matter what traditions you celebrate, or whether you plan on spending this year with family, friends or alone, there is no singular portrait of the holiday season.

Make the holidays your own by planning in a way that is best for you. Staying realistic can help with managing stress. Consider your holiday goals based on whether you plan on spending the season...

...With Yourself

Before the holidays, set aside some time to examine what you're really looking for. Is it solitude and self-care to recharge your battery? Is this an opportunity to explore cultural roots or a chance to serve your community? What do you want your holiday traditions to be?

Sometimes, knowing you can't spend the season with family and friends can lead to feelings of guilt. Remind yourself that there is no right or wrong way to spend the holidays. Take this

time to enjoy activities you may not otherwise get to if you spent the season with others.

...With Family

Families come in all shapes and sizes. Plan your holidays based on what suits your needs. For younger families, this is a good time to start experimenting and discover events and traditions you enjoy. For large groups, it can be chaotic to attempt a lot of activities – consider simplifying and focusing on just a few favorites this year. If the holidays need to be divided between families, the planning can be complicated, but kids often don't mind celebrating more than once.

...With a Partner

Spending the holidays with your significant other can create magical memories. Some things to consider when sharing the holidays with your partner include managing conflicting traditions, sharing time between families and compromising over events and activities. While the holidays can be a perfect time for romance, don't

forget to negotiate plans, establish boundaries and set a budget ahead of time.

...With Friends

You've probably heard of "Friendsgiving," but there's no reason why you can't spend other holidays with friends as well. Enjoying quality time with people who love and support you can make the season just a little brighter. If you and your friends celebrate different holidays, cooperate and experience a variety of different cultures and traditions throughout the season.

Establishing your priorities now will help make decision-making easier in the coming weeks, so you can experience less stress and more joy.

To access services available through SupportLinc, call 1-800-475-3EAP (3327) or visit www.supportlinc.com

The Holiday Toolkit

Extra events on the calendar and items to check off your To Do list can make the holidays seem more about stress than celebrations.

For resources, tools and tips to help you relax and enjoy the holidays, visit eaptoolkit.com/holiday today.

Journaling and Mental Health

Did you know that writing for only twenty minutes each day can improve your emotional and physical health? One study found that recording your deepest thoughts can decrease both stress and physician visits for illness. Writing can help you explore your feelings in a safe and positive way, so try some of these tips and start journaling today.

Start small. Writing in the midst of a busy day doesn't have to be an added source of strain. Even if you only journal for a few minutes, you can calm your mind and channel your emotions.

Experiment. Journaling is a personal journey. There are no rules, and you can discover your own process. Experiment by recording your thoughts over audio or turning your ideas into poems.

Add art. Art can help you express yourself in more abstract and visual ways than writing, so let the creativity flow.

Keep a schedule. Make your journaling a calming ritual. Try writing first thing in the morning or late at night. Whenever you can fit it in, use your writing time as a relaxing form of self-care.

Have a purpose. Are you trying to reduce stress? Do you want a way to organize your thoughts? Or, are you simply looking to add some creativity into your life? Setting an intention and goals can provide motivation for sticking with this new habit.

Reflect. Look back on old entries and think about the progress you made. Depending on how you use your journal, reflecting can help you track your mood over time. You can figure out what works and what doesn't for your wellbeing.

Starting a writing routine is as easy as putting pen to paper or fingers to keyboard. Follow some of these journaling tips to improve creativity and organize your thoughts and feelings.