MedBen WellCare

Mental Health and the Holidays

Mental Health Matters

While the holidays are supposed to be a time of joy and celebration, for many people, that is not the case. According to the American Psychological Association, **38%** of people surveyed said their **stress increased** during the holiday season, with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) finding that around **64%** of people report the holiday season makes their mental health conditions **worse**.

Planning ahead with a few simple tips can ensure that you prioritize your mental health to keep the holiday blues at bay.

TAKE A BREATHER.

Make some time for yourself. Taking a 15 minute break, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do.

DON'T ABANDON HEALTHY HABITS.

Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence will add to your stress and guilt. Stick to healthy eating habits as much as possible.

STICK TO A BUDGET.

Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend - and stick to it to avoid added stress later on.

LEARN TO SAY NO.

Saying "yes" when you should say "no" can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and family will understand if you can't participate in every activity or event.

EXPRESS GRATITUDE.

Focus on staying positive and avoiding negative conversations and situations. Find ways to show kindness and love towards your loved ones. Be in the moment and allow yourself to laugh.

REACH OUT.

Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious. If these feelings last awhile, reach out to your doctor or mental health professional.