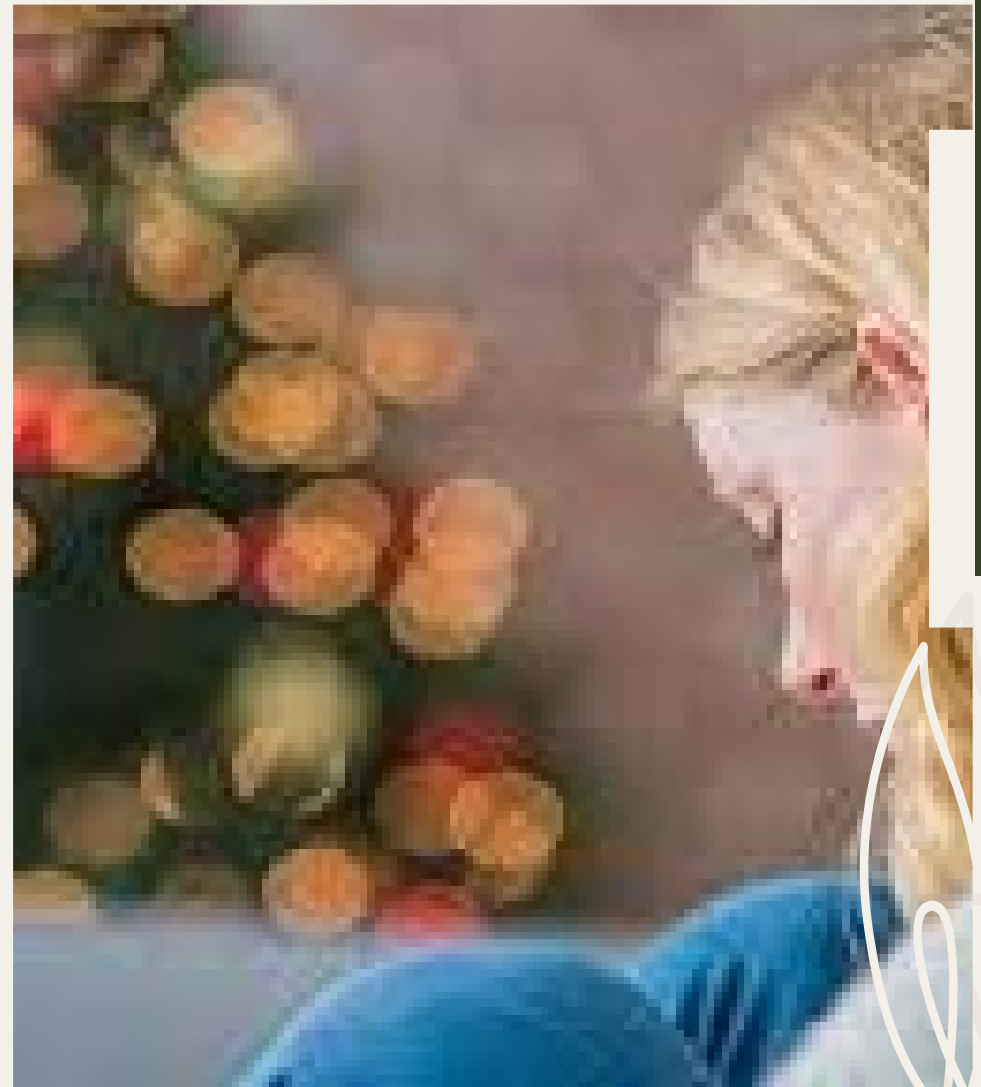


# Managing Mental Health Around the Holidays



# Merry & Bright?

The holidays are a time to be full of joy and cheer, but many struggle during this time of the year



NAMI noted that 64% of individuals with mental illnesses, feel their conditions worsen around the holidays



# But, why?

The holiday season tends to bring about a busier social life, deadlines, reminders of loved ones we've lost and to top it all off, there's less sunlight and seasonal depression!



# What Can You Do?

If you are experiencing worsening symptoms of your mental state around the holidays, here are some things you can do:



- Remember, you're not alone
- It's okay to not be okay
- Avoid numbing your feelings with alcohol and/or other substances as they can worsen anxiety and depression
- Surround yourself with people who feel the same way
- Celebrate traditions and/or create new ones
- Understand your triggers



- Plan to check in with your therapist, a support group, a faith group or friends who understand
- Let your loved ones know how they can support you
- Know, accept and let others know about your limitations and boundaries
- Schedule self-care
- Try to get as much sunlight as possible



Here's your game plan:

# Anticipate Stress

Make a stress management plan; what will you do when you begin to feel stress?

Ideas:

- Go for a walk
- Have a cup of tea
- Color
- Take a hot bath





# Fun > Perfection

Keep in mind it is not your responsibility to make things perfect for everyone. You can only do what you can do. Those who love and care about you will understand and respect that.



# Set Realistic Goals

What things to be realistic about:

- Who will you buy or make gifts for?
- What you plan to spend?
- What parties or events will you attend?
- Will you take time off work?



# Focus on Gratitude

If you focus on the positives in your life, you leave less room for the negatives. You may even try journaling 5 things you're grateful for every day. Small things. Being grateful increases your feelings of joy and contentment.





# Avoid Substance Use

Remember that use of substances can increase the symptoms of anxiety and depression. Not only that, you may fail to fulfill your commitments, you may choose to isolate to use and you may build up a tolerance leading to you needing more and possible ending in overdose.



If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, help can be reached 24 hours a day. Contact the Rapid Response Access Point at 833-710-6477 or visit [NH988.com](https://www.nh988.com)



Thank you for your time!

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