

# Giving Hope During the Holidays

The holidays can bring up a range of emotions for people. For many people, the holidays lead to a massive disruption in your day-to-day routine. Taking care of yourself is critical no matter your holiday plans.

According to the American Psychological Association, 38% of people surveyed said their stress increased during the holiday season, which can lead to physical illness, depression, anxiety, and substance misuse. The reasons given: lack of time, financial pressure, gift-giving, and family gatherings.

In the season of giving, OBH would like to give **Hope** by sharing a few ways that may help you and your loved ones.

## Things to Do:

- **Set realistic goals for the holidays.** Keep expectations simple for yourself and others.
- **Make a budget and stick to it.** Financial worries add more stress and you could spend several anxious months paying for whims of the moment.
- **Eat and drink in moderation.** Be sure to stay hydrated. Try not to overeat or drink excessively to escape stressful feelings. This interferes with sleep, and may have other unpleasant consequences.
- **Allow extra time when traveling.** Recognize that delays may occur because of increased security and heavier traffic.
- **Eat healthy foods** and include some type of exercise in your daily activities.
- **Exercise.** Going on a daily walk or going to the gym
- **Rest when you are tired.** Get enough sleep; your body needs it to keep working at its best.
- **Be still; allow quiet time.** Re-energize by giving yourself the gift of stillness and quiet amidst the busy-ness of the holiday season.

Whether you feel excited, nervous, anxious or stressed about the holiday season, you are not alone. By taking small actions each day, you can take care of yourself and make your mental wellbeing a priority.

## Things to Think About:

- **Pace yourself.** Remember that the holidays are more than one day - they are a part of a whole season. Spread enjoyable activities throughout the entire season.
- **Nurture yourself and others.** Recognize that everyone is responding to the current situation differently. Allow yourself to feel sad, angry or lonely. Take time each day to care for yourself and recharge your batteries. Allow others in your life to do the same.
- **Focus on the present.** Look forward to the future. Consider what is important in your life and good about these times.
- **Have a holiday that helps you feel better.** Consider starting new traditions or celebrating the holidays in a new way.
- **Make the best of whatever happens.** If you learn to deal creatively with the unexpected, this skill will serve you well when you need it.

**HOPE has a new number. If you or someone you know is having a difficult time this holiday season, you can contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.**

**Ask for help if you need it.** If you are feeling especially sad, stressed, anxious or depressed, ask for help. If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide or experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, **988** provides direct connection to free, confidential, and compassionate support. When you call, text or chat **988**, you'll be quickly connected to trained crisis counselors who will listen to your concerns, provide support, and connect you to additional resources if needed. There is **HOPE**. The Lifeline **WORKS**. You are not alone in crisis. For **24/7 confidential support**, just call or text 988 or chat at 988Lifeline.org/chat.