



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Champlain East
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
Champlain Est
La santé mentale pour tous

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Holiday Season Tips

Holiday magic. It might seem that it is real for most people. However, everyone is different. Many people find this time of the year energizing as they enjoy decorating, experience more opportunities to socialize with family and friends, shop for the perfect gifts and anticipate the upcoming celebrations. However, some people might find this time of year stressful and wondering how to accommodate their budget with the extra expenses these celebrations might bring. Other people might be struggling with some personal challenges or family stress that they need to take into consideration to protect their mental health. This article focuses on providing some tips to make this time of year a bit easier for all of us.

First of all, here are some ideas on how to give to friends, family members, neighbours or other people you care about without breaking the bank.

Create homemade gifts

You can create personalized gifts by baking, crafting, or making something with your specific skills like knitting, painting, baking, drawing, sewing, etc.

Offer a gift of time

You can offer to babysit someone's baby or young children, house-sit, or take care of someone's pet when they are gone. You can also create and provide a coupon book for services like a home-cooked meal, a massage, or help with a project or house chores.

Offer group gifts

Instead of buying a gift for every person in a group, organize a Secret Santa or other gift exchange where each person chips in a small amount towards a gift for only one other person, often with a set price limit.

Another way to make the Holiday Season a bit easier, is to put in place some conditions that can help reduce the stress family and friends gathering can bring. Here are some suggestions:

Set boundaries

You might feel the pressure of pleasing everyone and ensuring others are having enough fun, especially if you are the one hosting a gathering. That can be a lot of pressure. Thus, you can ask other people to help and try to delegate. You can even ask someone else to host the gathering this year. If you know they are certain topics that can bring tension, be kind and clear about boundaries and expectations. Make rules about what topics to avoid in discussions or plan a time to discuss difficult subjects in advance.



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Limit things that aren't good for your mental health

It might be tempting to indulge in many things, such as eating and drinking too much, or spending too much money on decoration and gifts. Overindulging can negatively affect your well-being. Be on the lookout for the things that might make you feel good in the short-term but cause you to feel worse in the long-term. Identify and find ways to limit your personal traps.

Holidays can be fraught with challenges and situations that stresses us, which can affect our mental health. See how you can try one or more of the tips I shared to make a positive difference. Try to keep things simple when you can and make sure you take good care of yourself.

DO YOU NEED HELP?

Dial or text 2-1-1 for free and confidential service that easily connects people to the critical social and community supports they need.

If you are thinking of suicide, please call 9-8-8 which is a mental health crisis and suicide prevention line.

The information provided is not a substitute for professional advice. If you need advice, please consult a qualified health care professional. For further information or if you want to access our services at CMHA, please call 1-800-493-8271 or visit our web site at www.cmha-east.on.ca