

# Nurturing Your Mental Well-Being at the Holidays



The holidays can be joyful but also challenging for many people for a variety of reasons such as financial struggles, distance from family, or strained relationships. These circumstances can significantly impact mental health.

Here are some thoughtful ways you can take care of your mental well-being during this season:

- **Combat Isolation with Outdoor Activity:** The winter weather in northern Michigan often leads to increased isolation. Despite the cold, make an effort to get outside. Physical exercise, even a short walk, can boost your mood by releasing natural endorphins – the chemical hormones that contribute to feelings of happiness.
- **Cultivate Positivity through Plant Care:** Taking care of a plant can be a therapeutic activity. It gives you a sense of nurturing and encourages you to open the curtains for natural light. Consider adopting a plant as a companion during the holiday season.
- **Engage in Community Events and Local Shopping:** Combat isolation by attending community events and shopping locally. These activities provide opportunities to meet new people, build connections, and foster a sense of community. Shared experiences can positively impact your mental health.
- **Build Strong Support Systems:** Joining community groups, like book clubs or other activity-based gatherings, can be a great way to interact with people who share similar interests. Forge connections with friends, neighbors, or church members, creating a supportive community of your choosing.
- **Prioritize Nutrition for Mental Health:** Be mindful of your diet, especially during the winter months when access to fresh produce may be limited. Nutrition plays a vital role in mental well-being, so try to include healthy foods to support your overall health.
- **Manage Economic Stressors:** The desire to give during the holidays can be hindered by financial limitations triggering feelings of sadness and depression. Consider thoughtful, budget-friendly alternatives such as handmade gifts or acts of kindness. Remember, the sentiment behind the gesture matters most.
- **Express Your Feelings Creatively:** Channel your emotions into creative outlets. Write in a journal, create art, or express yourself through music. Creativity can be a therapeutic way to process and release emotions.
- **Plan Restorative Activities:** Prioritize activities that bring you comfort and relaxation. Whether it's a warm bath, reading a good book, or spending time in nature, engage in activities that rejuvenate your mind and spirit.

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