



# Holiday Stress Workshop

Be seen. Be heard. Be healed.™





The format of the class is instructional.  
Participants will be muted throughout the presentation.



If you would like to answer a question or interact with the presenter, type your message or comment in the chat box (you can select for the message to be routed directly to the presenter).



Join the audio by pressing the headphones symbol

# Format for the Workshop

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# Managing Time with Family and Friends

Family gatherings can throw us into old patterns and behaviors. We may find ourselves responding in ways we normally would not do.





# Holiday Season...a time of Joy?

- The holiday season can be the most wonderful time of the year spent with family and friends, but you may also experience:
  - Racing thoughts: running to-do list.
  - Muscle tension
  - A sense of urgency
  - Negative thoughts you can't stop

# What we can do to make the Holidays More Enjoyable

01

Reflect on Past  
Holiday Seasons

02

Manage  
Expectations of  
Time Together with  
Family and Friends

03

Take Care of  
Yourself

- Beginning in November until New Year's Day, there is a PREDICTABLE beginning and end to the Holiday Season.
- With a little planning, we can create our own map for navigating happier holidays.



# Navigating Time with Family and Friends

Be aware of the hot spots and try reacting differently.

- Feel free to shift the topic to more enjoyable memories or discussions

Practice letting go.

- That picture of the meal, or that snub, or a storm derailing your plan—they're all just thoughts. Don't wrestle with it, and don't engage with it quite as much. Everything will NOT be perfect, and that is okay.

Take a break

- Playing games or building puzzles together or going outside for a family walk can ease the tension and create new traditions.

Limit time together, if needed

- A 3-day weekend may be more enjoyable than a 5-day trip.

Lonely? Open yourself up to new connections.

- invite friends over to spend time during the holidays, or consider volunteering to help others in need



# Info about your presenter

A Behavioral Health Consultant is trained as a psychologist or clinical social worker and works as part of the primary care team.

Our role is to support achieving healthier bodies and minds.

- Our visits are short term (1-6 visits for 30-minute appointments) focusing on:
  - Mental Health: anxiety, depression, grief, adjusting to life
  - Physical Health: exercise, eating healthy, better sleep, following Dr's treatment plans
  - Providing referrals or consulting with your doctor regarding your needs

# Set a SMART goal!

- Take some time now to brainstorm some SMART goals to implement to better manage holiday stress. Go through each step of SMART and ensure that your goal lines up with all five parts.



# Take Care of Yourself

- Stress decreases our ability to cope and has a negative impact on our wellbeing. Healthful behaviors help to reduce stress and increase our ability to cope.
  - Exercise
  - Get adequate sleep
  - Eat Healthily
  - Slow down! Add in ways to stimulate the Relaxation Response.
  - Add in recovery time
  - Practice self-compassion
  - Don't schedule every free moment.



# Reflect on Past Holiday Seasons

- Recall joyful experiences and more difficult ones.
  - Increase your time in joyful activities
- Think about any triggers that increase your overall stress level (a certain family member, a place, a tradition, etc).
  - Prepare strategies to manage the difficult ones.
- Acknowledge any difficult losses than may impact your holidays this year.
  - Decide how you will take care of yourself.
- Choose your priorities carefully.  
What do you want to focus your time and attention on?





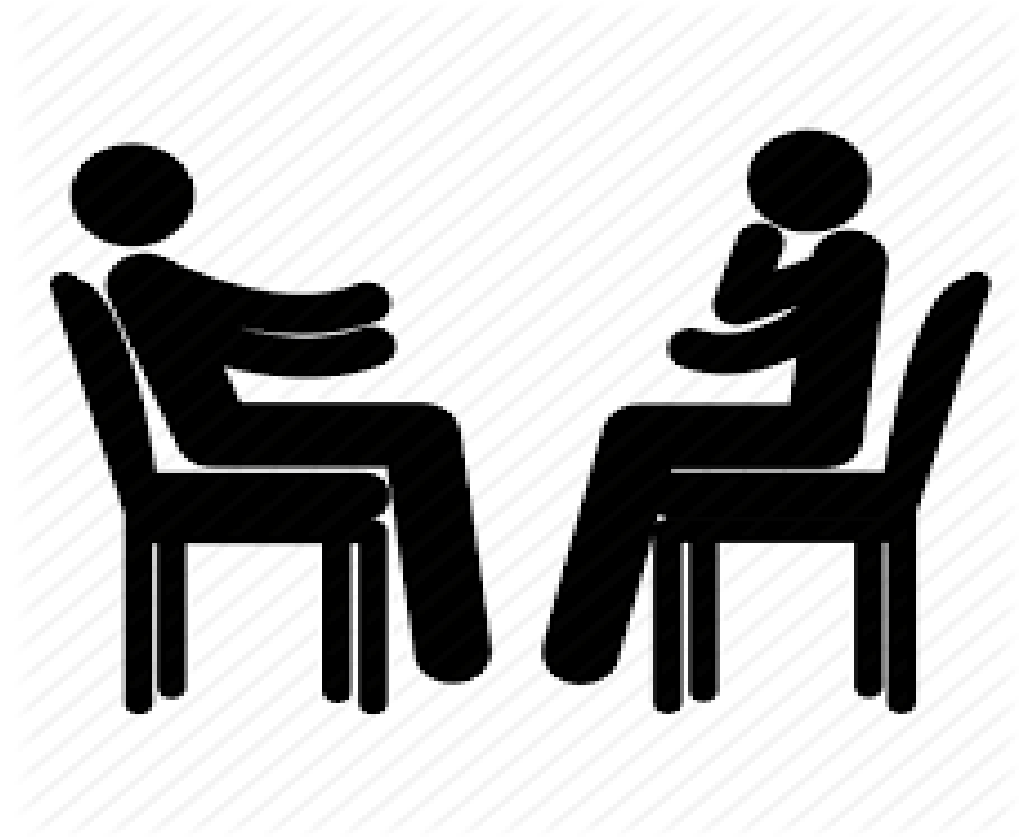
# Guided Imagery

CABIN IN THE WOODS



# If you need additional, 1-on-1 support your Behavioral Health Consultant is available.

- Call your doctor's office or speak with your PCP about a referral to the Behavioral Health Consultant



# Cultivate a Sense of Gratitude

- During the holiday season we often have unrealistic expectations and lead to stress and disappointment.
- Cultivating gratitude has been found to reduce stress, This is a great time of year to build daily gratitude into your life.
  - **Look out for negative cognitive distortions:** thoughts that begin with "always," "never," "should," etc. These thoughts tend to be exaggerated and can promote a sense of negativity.
  - **Change your choice of words and focus.** Our thoughts influence our moods, so by altering the way we respond to them we can alter our mood.
  - Begin and end each day **noting three things for which you are grateful**, your focus becomes "what you have" rather than "what you don't."



*Happy Holidays*