Building Resilience During Winter Celebrations

Stress does not have to overshadow joy this year, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. These tips can help you maintain your emotional well-being and keep you and your loved ones healthy in the weeks ahead.

**Plan ahead**
Managing and avoiding stress is easier when you have a plan. Start by identifying the situations you find most stressful. Then think of ways to deal with the difficulties you can control.

**Simplify your commitments**
It is okay to say no to invitations. Prioritize the virtual activities you'll enjoy the most, and take time to relax and recover from socializing.

**Take care of your body**
The season can disrupt healthy habits. Get plenty of sunlight and sleep. Eat healthy foods, exercise, and practice moderation when you celebrate virtually.

**Use your sense of humor**
Laughter really works. It can relieve pain and stress, relax muscles, and improve your mood—even if it feels forced at first. Try it when things get tough.

**Stick to a budget**
This time of year can get expensive. Know how much money you can comfortably spend and stick to a budget. Or ask your loved ones to embrace low-cost alternatives like exchanging acts of kindness, making handmade food and gifts, or donating to a charity.

**Set realistic expectations**
Movies and social media can create impossible expectations. Let go of perfection. Set reasonable goals and know that good enough can be great.

**Volunteer your time and talents**
Finding virtual ways to help others in need feels good. It can also help you appreciate what you have, and may put your own problems into perspective.

**Try to be patient**
You can’t control how others act during virtual get-togethers, just how you respond. Try to accept people and situations as they are, and remember: they may be stressed too.

**Reach out**
Everyone feels lonely at times. Reach out virtually to those around you—loved ones, spiritual advisors, coworkers, online support groups. Don’t be afraid to talk to your doctor or a mental health professional if your feelings of isolation, anxiety, or depression don’t ease. They can help.

**You stop the spread**
There are many ways to stay connected safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can:

- Have a virtual dinner party.
- Plan a group video chat or phone call.
- Play games together online.
- Shop online instead of in person.
- Share movies or music.
- Send a joke, picture, or heartfelt message every day.
- Have a virtual talent show or friendly contest over decorations or costumes.

**Put your well-being first**
Managing our behavioral health during times of stress isn’t easy. You don’t have to do it alone.

**Talk to someone who understands for free**
Use these free resources:

- Call 1-800-273-8255 (TTY 1-800-799-4889)
- Text HOPELINE to 741741

**Find the right resources for you**
Visit resilient.wisconsin.gov for resources built for you and the challenges in your life.