



# Tips for Surviving the Holidays

While the holidays are a time for joy and celebration, for families who have experienced trauma this can also be a time that brings up painful memories. Between the demands of family, work, and holiday errands, it can be difficult to catch your breath. As we head into this hectic season, it's important to remember to care not just for others, but for ourselves as well.

*Here are a few tips and ideas to help you through this stressful season:*

- **Plan positive activities** with supportive people. Make things happen. Don't wait. Plan to do some type of outdoor activity, either alone or with a friend. Take a walk; go skiing if you're really brave! Exercise and cold, fresh air can really boost your mood!
- **Don't be afraid to say no** to attending gatherings or to being around people or situations that may be uncomfortable -- plan something more positive during that time.
- **Don't have high expectations:** Be realistic about gatherings with families. Don't assume it is a time to heal conflicts with other family members. Take an attitude of holiday truce if you must be with people with whom you have unfinished business.
- **Prioritize;** consider whether you have to do everything during the holidays just because you "always do it." Maybe you could make write your seasonal cards later (call them New Year's cards), or skip the baking this year.
- **Surround yourself with people you trust** and who understand and comfort you: There is usually someone, if only one person, with whom you feel safe. It's okay to lean on that person or people during the holidays.
- **Don't compare.** The temptation is to think that the holidays are supposed to be a certain way. There may have been happier times in the past that fit that picture. Avoid comparing your present experience to past ones. Don't compare your experience to what you see others doing.

For more Holiday Help tips, visit <http://www.familysupportline.org/resources/holiday-help-survivors>



100 West Sixth Street ♦ Media PA 19063  
[610] 891-5275 ♦ Fax [610] 891-0481  
[mail@familysupportline.org](mailto:mail@familysupportline.org) ♦ [www.familysupportline.org](http://www.familysupportline.org)