

ILLUMINATION PSYCHOTHERAPY



SHINING A LIGHT WITHIN



Mental Health Tips For The Holidays

1

Manage Expectations

Recognize that often we have fantasies about what a holiday “should” be. We are disappointed when the reality does not match this ideal. Go into the holidays recognizing we are all imperfect and that is ok. Past patterns are best predictors of outcome for this holiday. Having a clear view of reality (and letting go of the fantasy) helps us accept what is and set appropriate boundaries.

2

Know Your Triggers

Think in advance about the things that trigger your anxiety, depression, frustration and the like during the holidays. Recognize what thoughts and behaviors start showing up when you start to feel this way. Identify in advance what helps you when you are emotionally triggered in this way.

3

Have A Plan

Plan in advance for how you want to respond to what triggers you and other common issues that come up during the holidays. Extend yourself some grace, recognizing that we are all doing the best we can with what we have. A plan can be: taking some space for yourself, deep breathing, exercising, talking to a trusted support.

4

Remember What Matters To You

In the moment, issues can seem really big. Take a moment to set out (in advance of the holidays) what, in the bigger picture of life, is important to you. When you start to feel your emotions rise, take a deep breath and ask yourself if the current issue is part of that big picture. If not, set it down and walk away. If it is important, set an appropriate boundary for yourself.

5

Find Support

The holidays can be difficult for many reasons, such as family issues, grief, loneliness, disappointment, financial stress, anxiety and depression. Leveraging your system for support is key. If you are struggling, reach out to your support system, whether it is family, friends, a therapist or, if it is a crisis, call 988 or 512-472-HELP (Integral Care).