Holiday Considerations for Families During COVID-19

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MEDICINE *of* THE HIGHEST ORDER

UR MEDICINE

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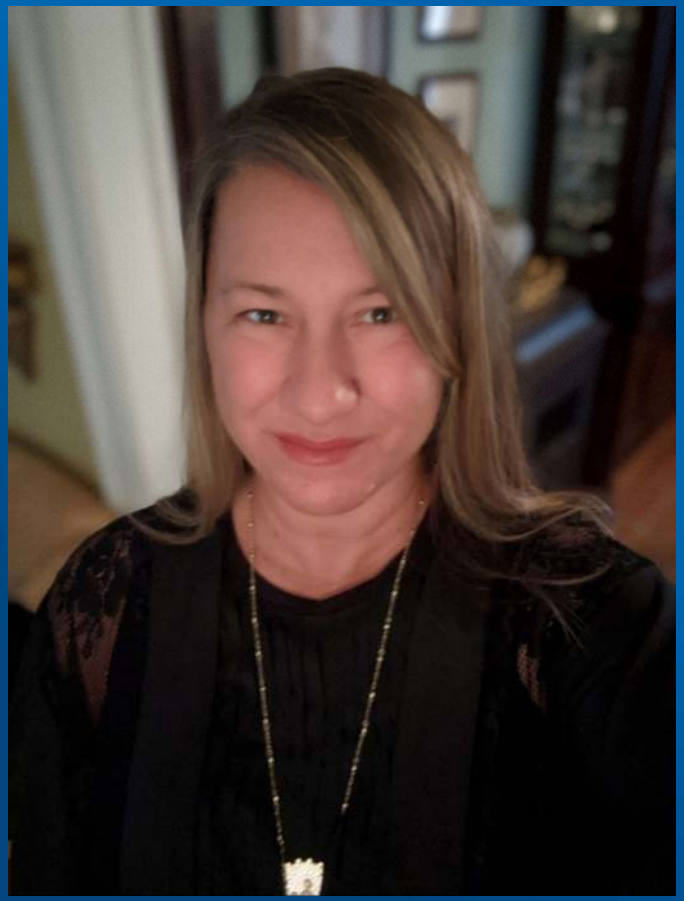
Disclosures

We have no disclosures to report

Fun Zoom Confession
(working from home looks different)



Holidays and Seasonal Traditions Might Look and Feel Different

Acknowledgement of Loved Ones Lost

Making Plans

Planning What Your Own Household Needs

- What do you need?
- What is your comfort level?
- What do others in your household need this year?

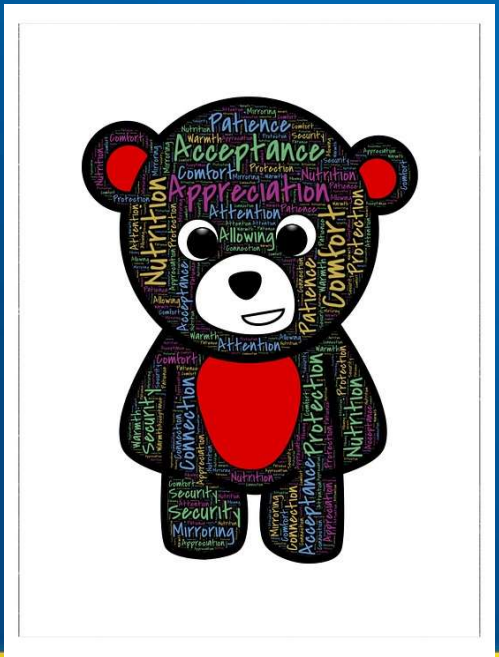
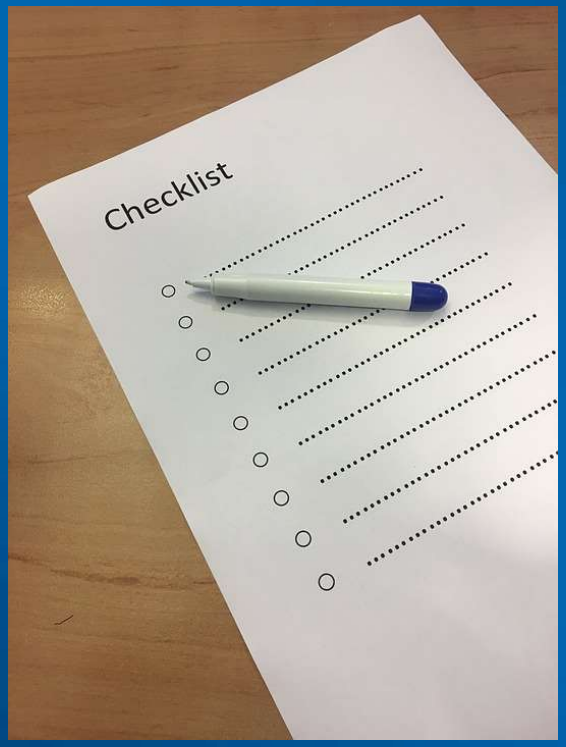


Image: John Hain

Photo: Graham Ruttan

When something seems big…

- Break it down
- Use self-talk
- Talk with somebody you trust



Holiday Planning May Look Different

Making Plans with People Outside of Your "Bubble"

- Talk to families and friends sooner than later
- Communicate clearly in advance what your family needs
- Prepare for all details to ensure comfort and safety

If there will be visitors at your home…

- Clearly communicate expectations with your guests
- Prepare your child or children for the additional people
- Help your child identify ways to cope with extra stimuli in advance

Photo: CDC via www.unsplash.com

Photo: Wayfair.com

Image: Gerd Altmann

"Should" versus "Could" for Decisions

Photo: Juan Sixto

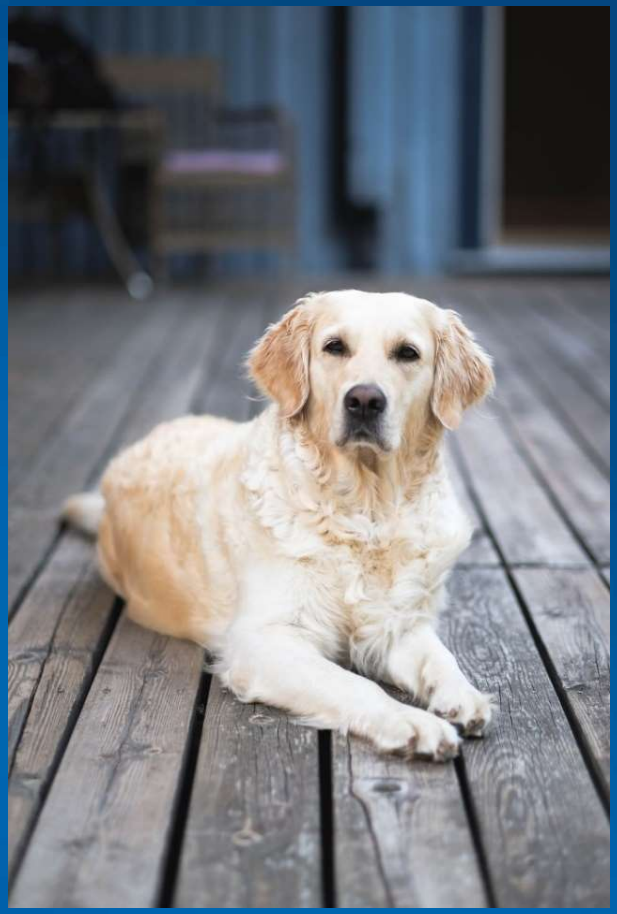


Photo: Max Sandelin

Not everyone will be happy with the decisions made during the holiday season…

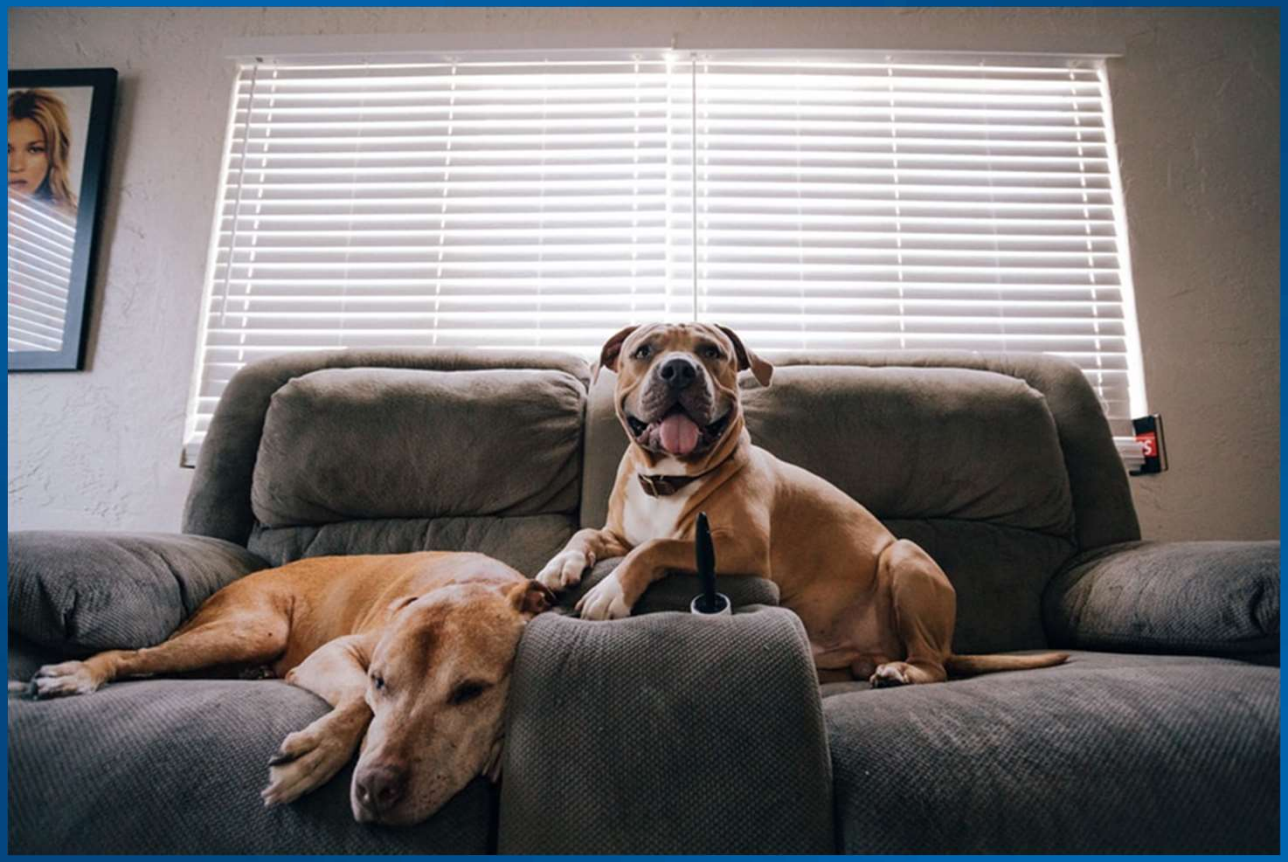


Photo by: Kevin Turcios

…and that is ok.

Photo by: Fabian Gieske

Holiday Traditions May Be Different

- Change can be tough for *all* people
- Provide facts to your child or children
- Provide choices for making events special in a different way

Photo: Pixaby.com

Photo: Jordan Whitt

Photo: Victor Daniel Giraldo

Holiday Traditions May Be Different

- Public places may be closed or have limited capacity
- Use resources to help your child, such as social narratives, calendars, schedules, etc.
- Technology may help to connect with family (e.g., phone call, Zoom, FaceTime)

Photo by: Gabriella Clare Marino

Story by: Tara Tuchel
autismlittlelearners.com

Photo by: Alexander Drummer

Holiday Traditions May Be Different

- Some families might choose to celebrate outdoors
- Some family members may need to stay home
- You may shop less or shop on the internet, if possible

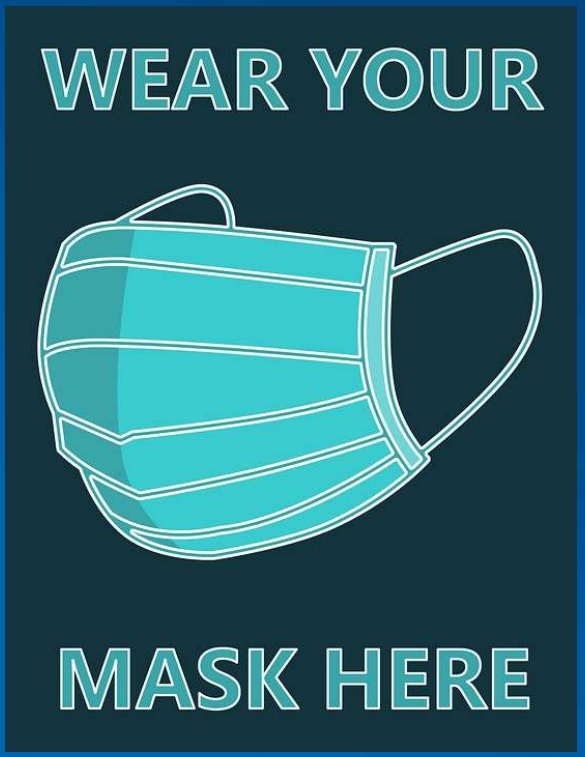
Photo by: Hannah Busing

Photo by: Pradeep Javedar

Photo by: Macau Photo Agency

If you are planning to travel…

- Consider planning for:
  - A new type of travel modality
  - Managing crowds
  - Mask requirements
  - Educating friends and relatives in advance about ASD
  - Picky eating
  - Bedtime routine
  - Travel advisories for weather, health, etc.



School Is Likely Already Different At This Time

- Acknowledge when there is a break from school
- A visual calendar may help

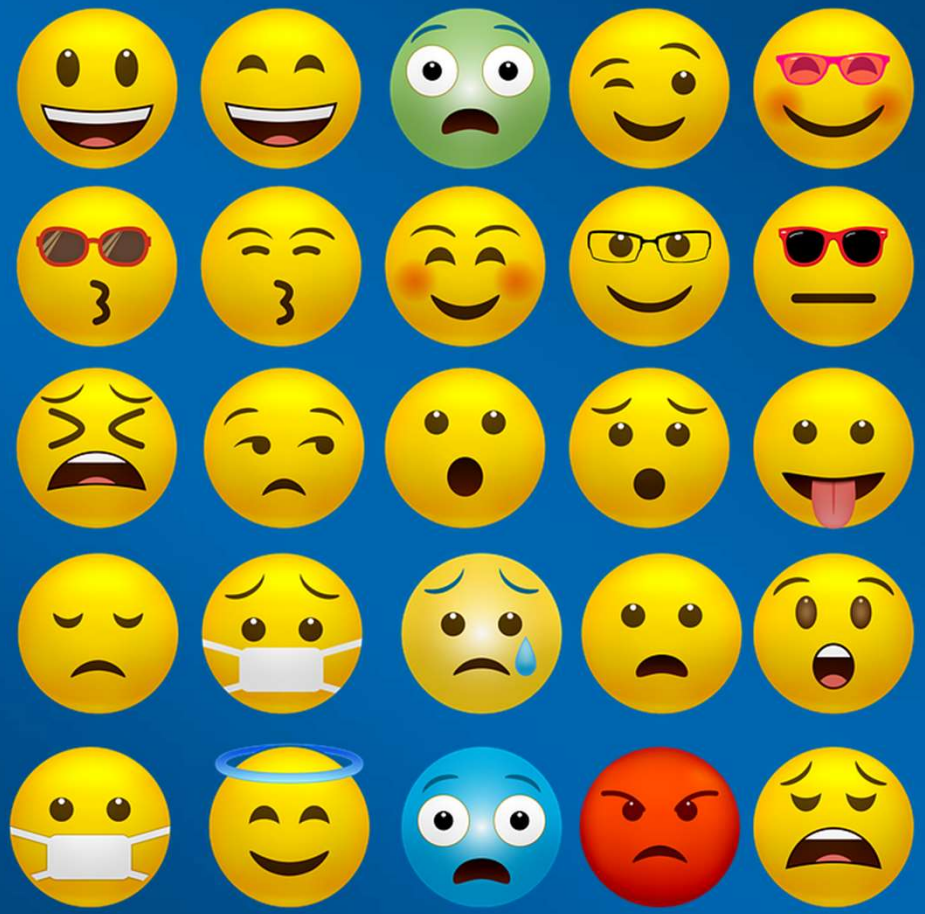
Photo: Jessica Lewis

Focus on the Positives and Silver Linings

Caregiver Self-Care

Photo: Calle Macarone

How are we all doing?



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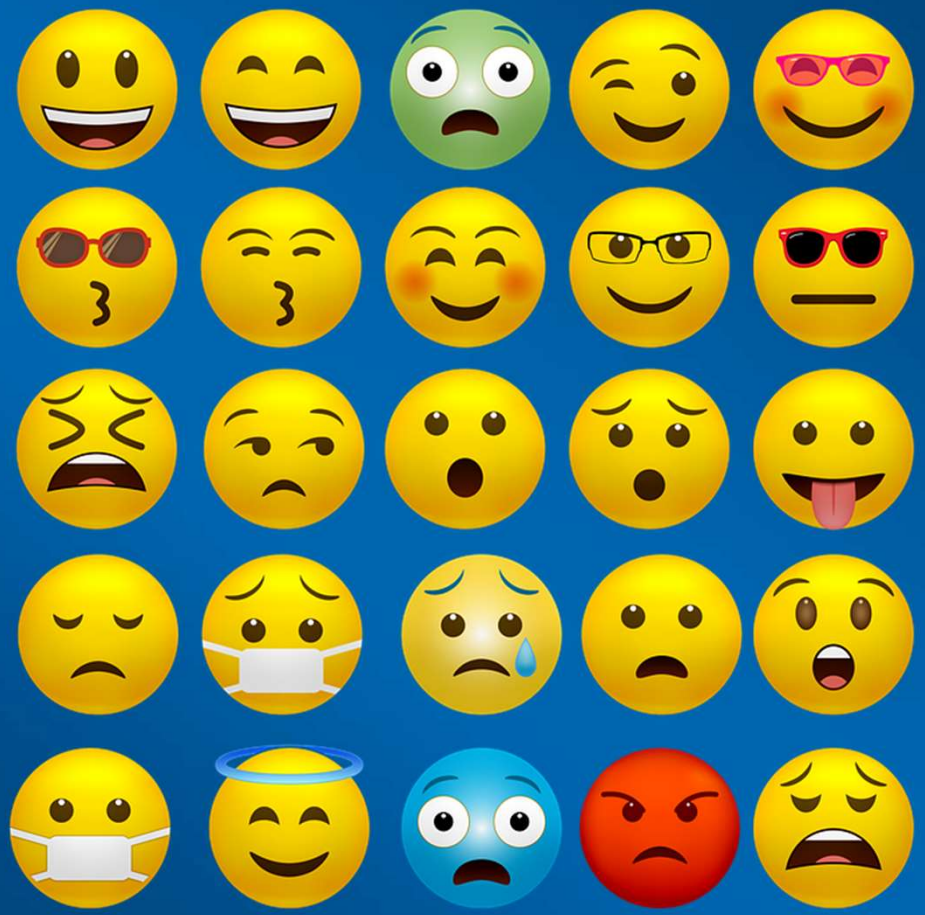
It’s okay to be…



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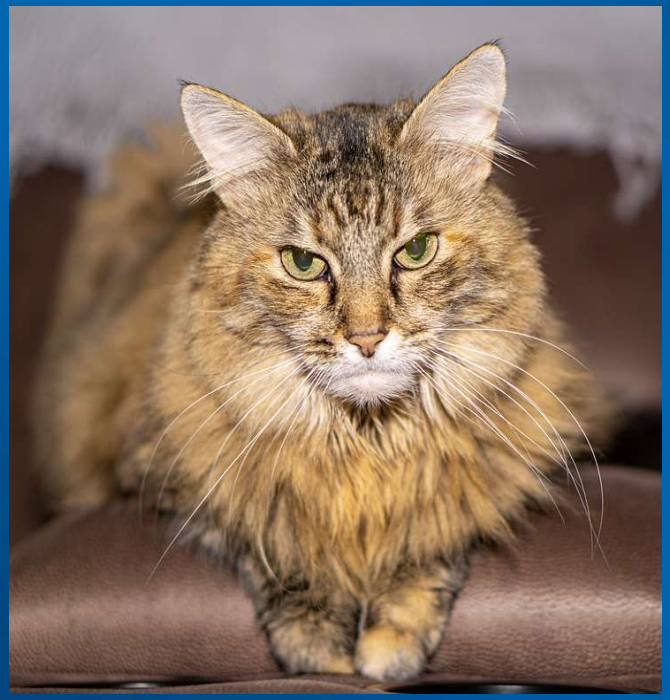
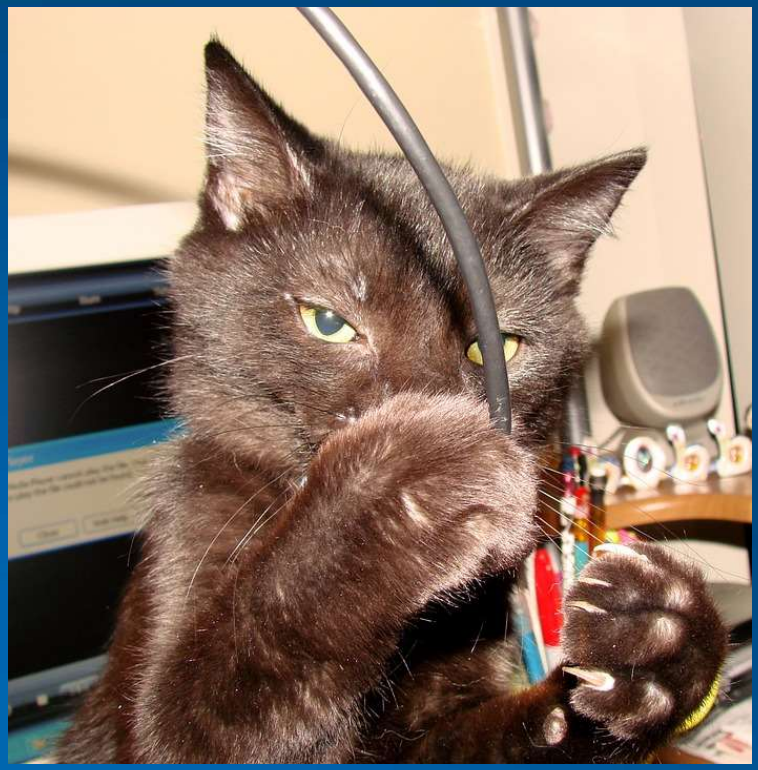
“That’s so 2020”





Caregiver Self-Care

Depending on where you live and your comfort, follow your doctor's advice about attending your:

- Yearly physical check-up
- Recommended Tests (i.e. colonoscopy, mammogram, blood work)
- Dental Cleanings and Check-Ups
- Follow-Up Appointments
- Mental Health Appointments

This! The Basics!

SELF CARE MENU

SECONDS

- Take a break while walking around the car after putting the kids in their car seats
- Turn your phone off
- Moment of silence
- Congratulate yourself on doing something small
- Savor the moment when something good hapens
- Wear your favorite perfume

MINUTES

- Burn a candle
- Have a cup of tea or coffee
- Take 10 deep breaths
- Quick meditation or prayer
- Put music on (and dance?)
- Stretch
- Call someone you love
- Conversation with a friend
- Give a compliment
- Write a thank you note
- Buy some flowers
- Go outside!
- Create relaxing morning routine
- Do something creative
- Go for a walk
- Mini pamper session.sheet masks
- Bubble bath/hot shower
- Unplug from technology for an hour
- Social media break
- Make your favorite meal
- Order out dinner
- Try a new, healthy recipe
- Write down 5 things you are thankful for
- Heat up buckwheat neck pillow in microwave

HOURS

- Declutter a space/clean
- Watch your favorite movie again
- Read a good book
- Take a nap
- Get a massage
- Yoga
- Date night (in or out) with partner or friends
- Have an intense workout session

LONGER

- Try a new hobby or restart an old one
- Try something new!
- Therapy
- Mindfulness, meditation

Take it one day at a time

or Hour

or Minute

or Second

Photo by: Firza Pratama

Give Yourself Permission To Simplify The Holidays This Year

Photo: Khloe Arledge

Photo: Cleo Stracuzza

We cannot be everything

to everyone

all the time.

Supporting Mental Health

Mental Health Considerations

- If you have paid time off from work available, take it when you need it
- Make a plan for checking in on loved ones and having loved ones check on you
- Take care of your physical health
- Exercise
- Try to get outside for a break
- Be aware of your sleep needs
- Remind yourself of what helps you during times that are challenging

Accessing Mental Health Services

Crisis Numbers and Websites

211 Life Line (in any county)

- Access to support for food, housing, mental health, legal, family, utilities
  - www.211.org
  - Call: 211

Crisis Text Line

- Text chat with a person
- Text: CONNECT to 741741

CDC Emergency Preparedness and Response

- https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp
  - Disaster Distress Help Line:
    - Call: 1-800-985-5990
    - Text: TalkWithUs to 66746

Additional Mental Health Supports

COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline:

- Call: 1-844-863-9314

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

- Call: 1-800-799-7233
- TTY: 1-800-787-3224

www.psychologytoday.com

- Find a therapist in your area

Many therapists are taking new clients during this time and will set up a video session with you. The cost will depend on the type of insurance you have and if the therapist takes it. Some therapists do self pay with a sliding scale for the cost.

All counties also have a County Mental Health Center

Acceptance of Reality

"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf."
- Jon Kabat-Zinn

Photo: Isai Ramos

COVID-19 and Holiday Resources

A thematically organized resource document related to COVID-19 + holiday-specific resources on last page: bit.ly/DBPCOVID19resources

links are case-sensitive

Mask Wearing Toolkit: bit.ly/URMCmask

Developed by the Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at the University of Rochester Medical Center

Photo: Anna Kolosyuk

We wish you all a happy, healthy holiday season!

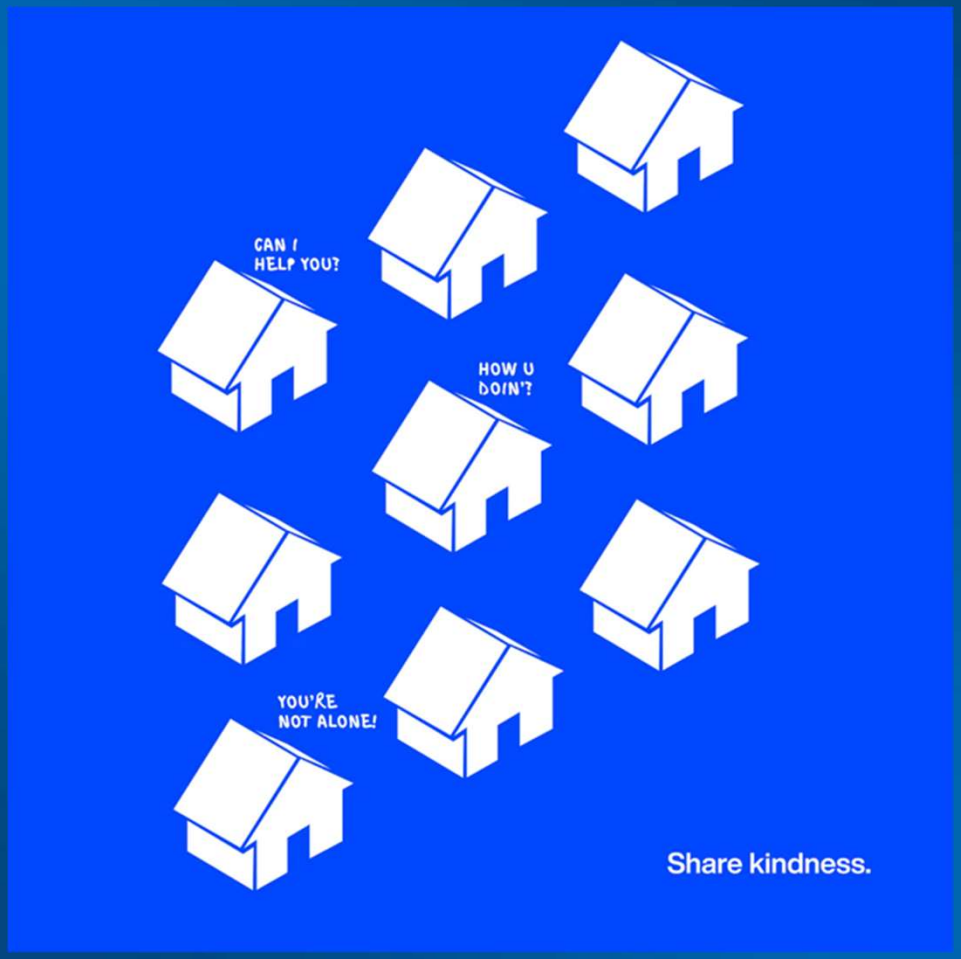


Photo: Rhoda Baer

Image: João Pedro Costa

Photo: Bill Branson

Questions?

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