EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE AND WORKLIFE

solutions

The quickest and best way to contact the EAP is by calling **1-800-222-0364**

# That's the Spirit

## Make the holidays work for you

Taking a holistic approach to caring for yourself this holiday season—and throughout the year—can really make a difference in your physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. Here are some suggestions to help keep you in balance:

## Get in the spirit and connect

For many, the end of the year is a traditional time of celebration. These festivities carry common themes of connection and generosity—bringing light to the darkening winter months. Below are a few ways to fully enjoy the holiday spirit.

### Connect with yourself

- **Take time for you**
  - Get up early and listen to your favorite music, while the rest of the house is asleep
  - Take a walk by yourself
  - Enjoy a relaxing bath or massage
- **Slow down and be in the present moment**
  - Be conscious of what you're eating, drinking, and talking about
    - Be fully there and aware during conversations with others
  - Deep breathing
    - Use deep breathing to relax and slow down, so that you can enjoy the moment
  - Progressive relaxation
    - Sit or lie down in a comfortable position and relax your body one area at time, starting with your feet

### Connect with nature

- **Visit a safe natural setting—like a park or botanical garden—and enjoy the beauty**

### Connect with others

- **Offer someone a smile and a friendly "hello"**
- **Visit a neighbor**
- **Volunteer or visit a nursing home or hospital**

### Be generous

- **Let someone go ahead of you, whether in traffic or a retail checkout line**
- **Give your time: Consider doing volunteer work with a community organization**
- **Give your attention: Actively listen when someone is talking**
- **Give to your favorite charity**

### Be grateful

- **Reflect on all the good people, experiences, and things in your life**
- **Give personal thanks to people who have made your life better or easier**

## Coping with challenging connections

While connecting with friends and loved ones can be nurturing and affirming, some behaviors and personalities can add increased stress to the holidays. Here are some tips on how to cope.

### Breathe deeply

- Start with a gentle and complete exhale, then take slow deep breaths to calm the body
- Count 'em out: Even seven conscious and deep breaths can help you feel less anxious or agitated

### Go out for some fresh air

- Walk away from a situation that becomes too emotionally charged
- Calmly excuse yourself and go somewhere quiet and safe
- Do not get pulled back into the situation; be clear about your decision not to engage with the other person

### Put things in context

- If you only see someone once a year on the holiday, let the smaller things slide

### Calmly assert your opinion

If you determine that something is important to you, calmly assert yourself and give your opinion. Realize, however, that your opinion may not be accepted. The goal is to have your voice heard, not to convince others to change their minds. If the other person hears what you have to say, that can pave the way for a healthy dialogue.

## Making the best of time with yourself

While some people are dealing with the stress of activities and social obligations, others may find themselves with more alone time than they would like.

### Reach out to others

- Give a friend or family member a call
- Do volunteer work

### Make yourself available

- Go to a public place where other people are creating community
- Join a social group or sports club
- Take a class on a topic that's always interested you

### Get out and get active

- Being active and going out can engage the mind and relieve some of the feelings of loneliness

### Take yourself on a date

- Go for a spa treatment, like a facial or a massage
- Go see a movie or a play
- Do whatever it is that makes you feel cared for and valued

### Take care

For a happy and healthy holiday, reach out to friends and loved ones or your spiritual community, if you have one. Stay connected to those things that nurture you and your spirit.

**Employee Assistance Program**

**24**

HOURS A DAY

**1-800-222-0364**

**(TTY: 1-888-262-7848)**

**FOH4You.com**

# THAT'S THE SPIRIT

## Make the holidays work for you

**Too often the demands, expectations, and hectic pace of the holidays can drain you. Make the holidays flow more smoothly this year with the help of your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). We can help you make the best of the holidays.**

**24** HOURS A DAY

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