

Holiday Stress Management Tool

How to Use:

- 1) Read through the tool kit below on your own, before sharing it to your team.
- 2) Consider stories you might share before the meeting, or ask people you know what they do as examples.
- 3) Share the tool kit below with your team.
 - Ask your team to share thoughts or ideas, to the extent they are comfortable sharing.
 - Share examples and ideas with your stories.

Introduction to the Tools

The holiday season can be filled with excitement but also stress. From money to time pressures, many people can have strong, mixed emotions toward the holidays. We hope that some or all of the science-backed methods below can help ease some of the pressure.

For the greatest benefit, try practising your favourite tool below every day leading into the holidays.



B Breathe!

When the build up to the holiday season feels heavy - try three, slow, deep breaths (where your belly and chest rises and falls). This is a quick, science-backed technique to reduce our stress response - and you can do it anywhere, anytime!

A Acknowledge your feelings

The holidays can be intense, from financial pressures to tricky family situations. To help difficult feelings pass, slow down and label them ("fear" or "anger"). This moves them from the reactive to the reflective brain, calming things down.

L Let go of what you can't control

Lot of things might be beyond your control during the holidays - like work hours or being away from family. Focusing on the things you can control, and then making plans based on what you CAN do, can reduce stress and worry.

L Look for the small things

We are wired to see the negative during times of stress, but finding the small, bright spots helps. Noticing when a meal is delicious or an upbeat song is playing helps us feel happier and more hopeful.

S Seek fun and laughter

Bring moments of joy, laughter and playfulness into your day, small things that make you feel good. Because science tells us this helps us handle tough situations and generally feel better.

- The more you practice the better, try adding one onto something you do 2-3 times everyday.
- Mix and match your favourites, such as breathing every morning, loof for small things every evening.
- Experiment with a new one each day for a week, then on the seventh day reflect on which ones made the biggest difference.