



## MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM ATLANTIC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS | December 2022

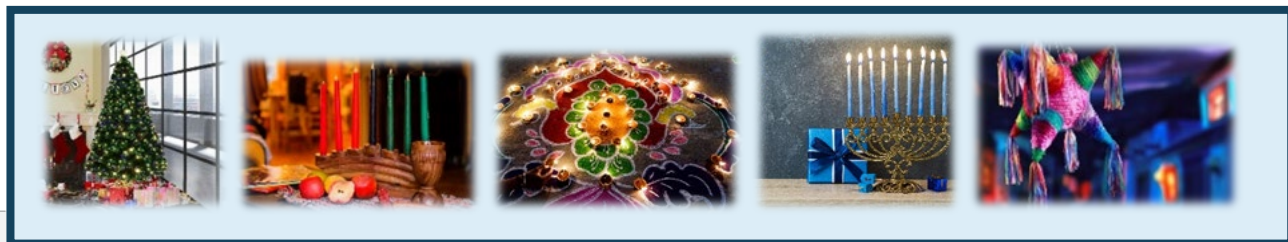
### Recipes for Holiday Well-Being

Ahhh ... the holidays ... the sights, sounds and smells of the season. For some, they evoke delight, joy, and a promise of magical moments. However, it is also common for people to feel overwhelmed or experience anxiety and depression, especially for those who are grieving or are isolated from loved ones. This holiday season, do a little mental health check-in to see what you need to “cook up” to feel your best and to support those you love.

We have had a few years of postponing or pulling in for the holidays, so there is a lot of pent-up energy to finally do it up big this year. Use your emotional brakes to slow yourself down. Be aware that it is easy to fall into the “overdoing” part of the holidays. Overdoing it can come on slowly, like a boiling pot, and before you know it, you are in emotional hot water with shopping, wrapping, and celebrating.

There are many reasons for holiday stress; it can be hard to find the perfect gift on a budget. Learning a family recipe for the first time can be stressful. And of course, dealing with a loss or managing difficult relationships is never easy during the holidays. Learning how to recognize and manage these feelings and stressors is a critical part of your wintertime well-being.

***With a little planning and some positive thinking, you can cook up something good for your mental health to help find peace and joy during the holidays.***



## Ingredients for a Stress Free and Joyful Holiday Season

Prepare your mental health for the holidays as if you're preparing your favorite recipe. Gather your ingredients. A cupful here ... a few teaspoons there ... and finally, a pinch for good luck!



**STRESSED IS JUST  
DESSERTS  
SPELLED BACKWARDS**

- **Boundaries** – Make your holidays reflect your values, your budget, and your energy levels. A spoonful of NO is necessary sometimes.
- **Limited Social Media** – Feelings of not being “good enough” or “FOMO” (that awful feeling of missing out) might lead you to some impulsive overspending or over committing, which can leave you feeling stressed later. Give yourself the gift of a social media break.
- **Feelings** – We all have treasured holiday traditions but sometimes we need to make changes to those old ways. When children go off and get married or have a new family our old traditions may need to be adjusted. It’s natural to feel some sadness when things change. Allow yourself to feel all those feelings and, when you are ready, see what you can cook up that will bring fresh new traditions into your family.
- **Acknowledge Loss** – If you have lost loved ones, it might be tempting to isolate during the holidays. Be sure to reach out to others to find the right amount of quiet self-reflecting time and important connecting time. Just like cooking, you will need to make you own recipe for finding what is just right for you.
- **Take a breather** – Make some time for yourself. Find an activity you enjoy. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Try some things that reduce stress, clear your mind, slow down your breath and restore inner calm.
- **Seek professional help if you need it** – Talk to your doctor or a mental health professional if you notice that you are persistently sad or anxious, have physical complaints, are unable to sleep, are feeling irritable or hopeless, and unable to face routine chores.

*When the ingredients are combined, they will create a more relaxed, enjoyable holiday season for all!*

## Importance of Holiday Self-Care



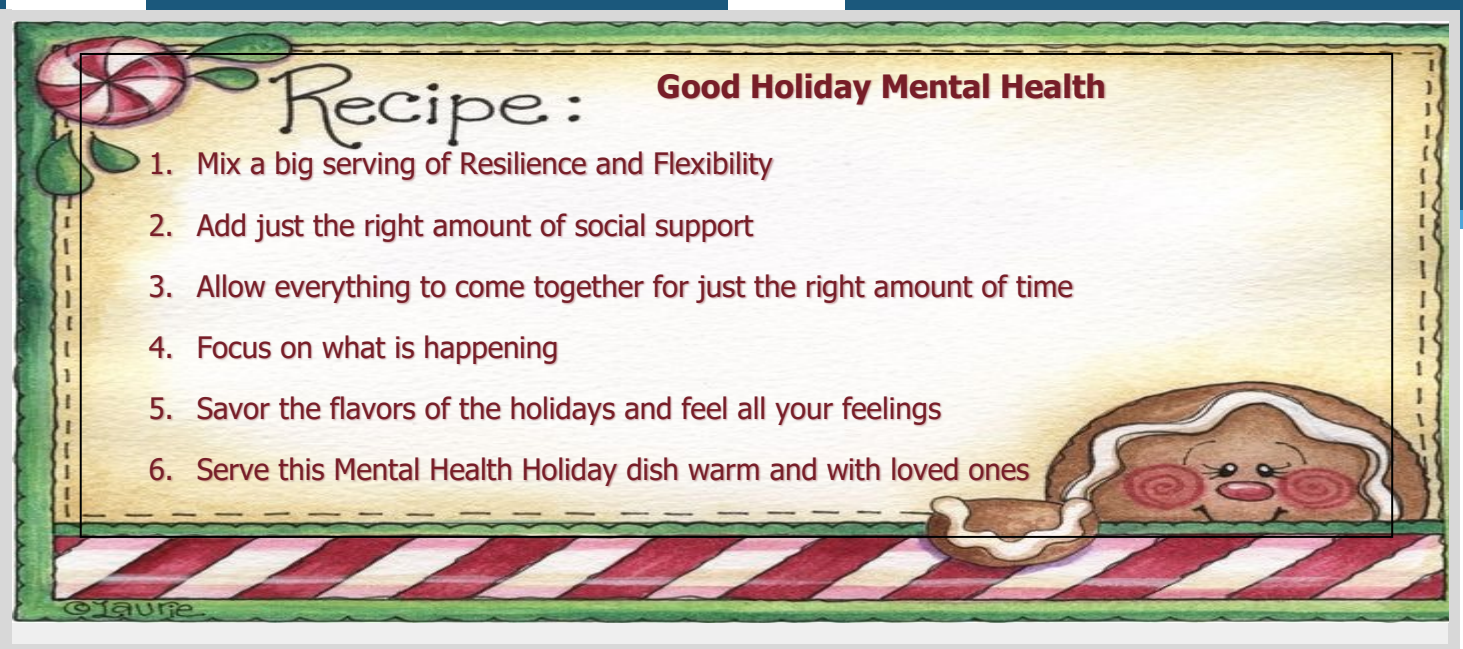
# Mental Health Benefits of Cooking

You probably know that cooking is good for your body, but it is also good for your mental health. Here are just a few ways that cooking can boost your mood!



- **Cultivates Mindfulness** – all that chopping, and prepping are perfect ways to be in the moment.
- **Develops patience** – waiting for those cookies to come out of the oven takes a lot of patience but is always worth the wait, especially when sharing with loved ones or those in need. Giving can be good for your mental health.
- **It's empowering** – trying something new helps builds confidence!
- **Satisfying for body and soul** – we need more than just food for the body! Check in with your faith to boost your spirit and mental health.
- **Stokes creativity** – there are so many ways to decorate cookies! Let your creativity flow.

[Cooking Is the Perfect Recipe for Mental Health | Psychreg](#)



## CRISIS RESOURCES

If you feel you or someone you know may harm themselves or someone else:

- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** 988
- **The Trevor Lifeline for LGBTQIA+ Youth:** 1-866-488-7386
- **Disaster Distress Helpline:** Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.
- **Veterans Crisis Line:** Dial 988 and Press 1
- **Dial 211:** 211 provides callers with information about and referrals to social services for every day needs and in times of crisis
- **SAMHSA Treatment Locator:** [findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov)

## Atlantic Behavioral Health ACCESS Center:

**888-247-1400**

## Atlantic Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Services

**24/7 Hotlines:**

Chilton Medical Center: 973-831-5078  
Hackettstown Medical Center: 908-454-5141  
Morristown Medical Center: 973-540-0100  
Overlook Medical Center: 908-522-3586  
Newton Medical Center: 973-383-0973



Website:  
[Atlantichealth.org](http://Atlantichealth.org)



Atlantic Health System  
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