



The holiday season is here! Jam-packed social calendars, deadlines at work, sleepless nights, family gatherings, dreams of pulling off a picture-perfect holiday dinner--the list goes on and on. It's important to remember that this constant whirlwind of social commitments and "to dos" in the days leading up to the holidays, can take a toll on your physical and mental well-being. There are ways you can alleviate some of the stress over the holidays and improve your mental health.



## Practice Mindfulness and Meditation

Mindfulness and meditation can be even more valuable mental wellness tools during the holiday season. Practicing mindfulness can be particularly helpful if you are traveling or dealing with a runaway social calendar this holiday season. Meditation is a great way to help you focus on what matters most this holiday season.

## Be Kind to Yourself!

Doing things that make you happy and taking care of yourself ensures you bring who you really are to the holidays, so that you can enjoy all the wonder and joy of the season with family and friends.



## If Snow is Blowin' – Think Twice Before Goin'



Weather conditions can be unpredictable during the holidays, placing additional stress on travel plans for holiday shopping and festive celebrations with family and friends.

**Plan Ahead** – make sure your vehicle is in good shape for winter travel. Have a winter car safety kit in case things go awry during the drive.

**Stay Fresh & Alert** – make sure you're well rested before long drives; stop and take regular breaks.

**Mind Your Speed** – speed limits are set for ideal conditions, drive slower in snowy, icy, or foggy weather.

**Avoid Distractions** – driving requires your full attention; pull over, when safe, to use your cell phone.

**Stay Connected** – notify others before you travel; let them know your destination and estimated arrival time.



## The Empty Spot

The holidays can be especially challenging for those of us who have lost a loved one, whether it happened recently or years ago. Be sure to make space for your grief and embrace your treasure of memories. Grief comes as a result of giving and receiving love so allow yourself to be surrounded by friends and family to share your feelings.

## The Comfort Zone

It is often very difficult for many people to seek help, especially for our mental health. Humans are social creatures, and we benefit from living in social groups, supporting each other, and relying on one another's strengths. Reaching out for help is a big step, and one that shows significant courage.

If you or someone you love needs help, anytime of the year – ask for help. The Employee Family Assistance Program offered through Homewood Health, offers assistance to eligible UofR employees and their eligible dependents – 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year.



For more information about the EFAP Program and how to seek help, logon to UR Source [here](#).

**Have a Happy (and safe) Holiday Season!**  
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