

# December 2024 Mental Health First Aid Newsletter

## Dates & Events:

- Dec. 2 – National Build Joy Day
- Dec. 3 – Let's Hug Day
- Dec. 4 – National Cookie Day & Wildlife Conservation Day
- Dec. 7 – National Letter Writing Day
- Dec. 9 – International Day of Veterinary Medicine
- Dec. 20 – Ugly Sweater Day
- Dec. 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY
- Dec. 27 – Visit the Zoo Day
- Dec. 31 – NEW YEAR'S EVE

## Observances:

- Operation Santa Paws Dec. 1 – 24
- National Grief Awareness Week Dec. 2 – 8
- HANUKKAH Dec. 25 – Jan. 2
- KWANZAA Dec. 26 – Jan. 1
- National Giving Month
- National Cat Lovers Month



## JOY

Joy is one of the top 10 positive emotions.

Joy is a feeling of great happiness and pleasure that results from a sense of well-being, success, or from something good happening to you. During this holiday season, take time to savor the JOY you and your family experienced this past year and that you look forward to in the New Year.

Spread some joy and love on National Hug Day!



## Operation Santa Paws

Operation Santa Paws is a focus on donating needed items to shelters. Take time this holiday season to donate time or supplies that will bring some love and cheer to shelter animals.



## National Giving Month

Beyond giving presents and making donations, here are many other meaningful and valuable items that we can give to others:

Our time, Love, gratitude, experience, hopes, and laughter. Giving of yourself to those you care about is the best gift of all.



## International Day of Veterinary Medicine

International Day of Veterinary Medicine recognizes and appreciates the vital work done by veterinarians worldwide.

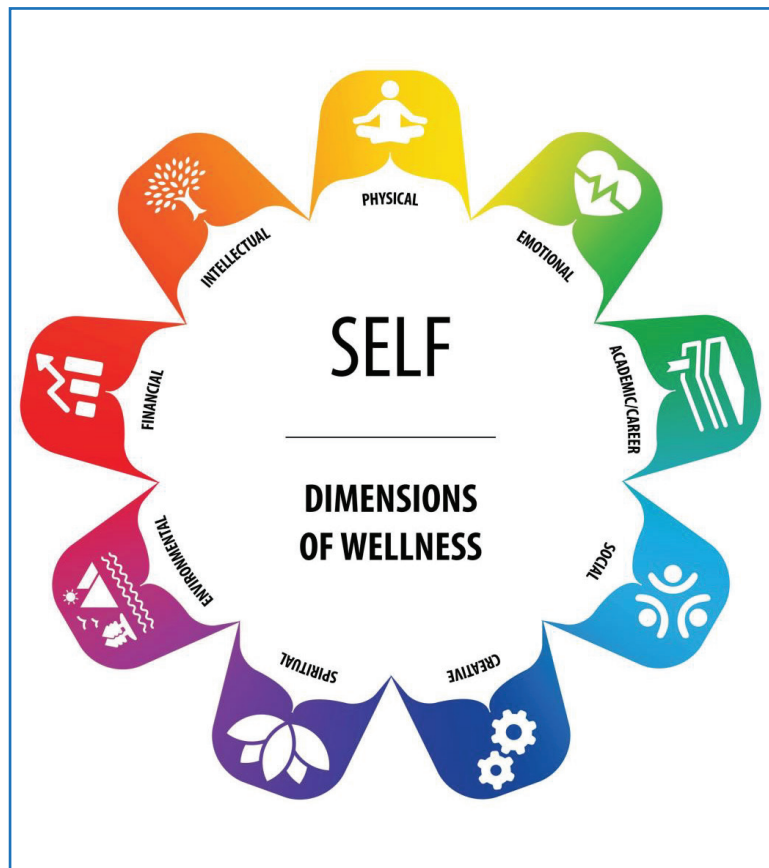


## Managing Your Mental Wellbeing During the Holiday Season

The holiday season is often described as “the most wonderful time of the year,” but for many it can also be the most stressful and challenging. According to one study, 38% of people say the holidays cause increased stress, depression and anxiety.<sup>1</sup> Family obligations, financial pressures, and general busyness can all take a toll on our wellbeing. Here are some tips to thrive during the holidays by promoting self-care.

### Tips for self-care during the holidays:<sup>1</sup>

- Find time for activities and hobbies that bring you joy and relaxation, such as reading or baking.
- Use relaxation exercises such as meditation and deep breathing to help you manage stress.
- Aim for at least one relaxing activity every day, such as a short walk or 30 minutes spent unwinding, whether listening to music, reading or journaling.
- Do at least one pleasurable activity every day, such as cooking or connecting with friends or loved ones.
- Set boundaries, which can include creating a “no” list with things you don’t like or no longer want to do.
- Get enough sleep. Adults usually need 7-8 hours of sleep each night.
- Look for opportunities to laugh! Laughter releases endorphins which promotes happiness and wellbeing.



- A holiday schedule to allocate time wisely and holiday budget to prevent spending stress.
- Prioritize your physical health by getting adequate sleep, staying hydrated and maintaining a regular exercise routine to boost your energy levels and overall wellbeing. Balance holiday treats and nutritional choices.
- **Create your own holiday traditions.**
- Establishing unique holiday traditions with loved ones can create a sense of joy and togetherness, like telling stories, honoring your family's history, playing games, enjoying seasonal displays and activities.
- **Recognize the importance of seeking help when needed.**
- Acknowledge that it's okay to seek help if you're struggling with your mental health during the holidays or any other time of year. Professional support can make a significant difference.
- **Release pressure to create the "perfect" holiday.**
- There is no universal definition of a perfect holiday. Everyone's holiday season will look different, and that's OK. Coping with societal or personal expectations can involve not comparing yourself to others, focusing on nurturing your own wellbeing traditions and meaningful experiences, or nurturing your own unique through self-care

Ref:  
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2. [https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fstock.adobe.com%2Fsearch%3DFred%20and%20Green%20Printable%20Banner&psig=AOvVawOrZLschdbS\\_PfsFizZbBQB&ust=1732741371555000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBQQRxqFwoTC0JB-OHy-okDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE](https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fstock.adobe.com%2Fsearch%3DFred%20and%20Green%20Printable%20Banner&psig=AOvVawOrZLschdbS_PfsFizZbBQB&ust=1732741371555000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBQQRxqFwoTC0JB-OHy-okDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE)  
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