

Student Wellness Tips: Managing stress over the holidays

We may call this period the winter “break,” but managing responsibilities and emotions over the holidays can be stressful. The holidays can trigger stress under normal circumstances. This year, we are also dealing with new restrictions and may need to adjust traditions, which can add to the challenges. Here are some tips to help you manage stress this season.

- ✓ **Find or create a healing space.** Select a space to be your special place - it could be your car, a corner of a room in your home, your bedroom, a park bench, anywhere! Prepare your space with a calming scent, relaxing music, and things that calm you, such as pillows, blankets, photos, or items from nature. You can do a relaxing activity in your space, such as beading or sewing, or simply take a moment to yourself.
- ✓ **Ask for help.** Holiday traditions can be hard work, especially for parents or those in busy households. Let others know when you are starting to feel stressed, and don't be afraid to reach out for help. If you need someone to talk to, call a trusted friend or reach out to the Wellness Services Counsellor.
- ✓ **Find ways to help others.** Stress does not only come from having too much to do - you can also be overwhelmed by your thoughts, loneliness or anxieties. One way to respond to these stresses is to help others. Call a loved one or community organization and ask how you can help. Or, do a good deed, like shovelling a neighbour's driveway. Helping others has healing properties and will also make you feel better within yourself.
- ✓ **Get outside and enjoy community activities.** Making the holidays enjoyable for your family can take a lot of work. Luckily, there are low-stress ways to make the season bright all around you! Community events, contests and activities are there for you to enjoy, and often take very little planning to participate in. Get involved and take advantage of what is just outside your front door.

Need someone to talk to? Confidential, drop-in counselling is available to adult education students every Tuesday and Thursday over the winter break (excluding Dec. 24 and Dec. 31). Simply text/call (514) 700-2832 or email chattoday2020@gmail.com to connect with a professional counsellor for support.

