

## TIS THE SEASON

This toolkit contains essential information and resources.



### + PURPOSE OF TOOLKIT

The purpose of this holiday toolkit is to provide you with practical strategies and compassionate guidance to navigate the holiday season with greater emotional well-being, hope, and peace. Whether you're facing challenges or simply seeking to enhance your holiday experience, this toolkit offers a variety of tools based on the REALIGN concept to support you.



### HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT:

- 1. Read through each section of the REALIGN framework.
- 2. Choose strategies that resonate with you or seem most helpful for your situation.
- 3. Implement one or two strategies at a time, giving yourself grace as you practice.
- 4. Revisit the toolkit regularly throughout the season, trying new strategies as needed.
- 5. Remember, this is a flexible resource adapt the suggestions to fit your unique circumstances.









# R-RESTRUCTURE YOUR EXPECTATIONS AND BELIEFS

## CHALLENGE NEGATIVE CORE BELIEFS ABOUT HAPPINESS AND THE HOLIDAYS

- Identify any negative beliefs you hold about the holidays
- Question these beliefs: "Is this always true? What evidence contradicts this?"
- Reframe negative beliefs into more balanced, hopeful perspectives

#### ADJUST YOUR HOLIDAY "SHOULDS" TO REALISTIC "COULDS"

- Make a list of your holiday expectations and rewrite them as flexible possibilities
- Focus on what truly matters to you, letting go of societal pressures.

#### FIND HOPE WHEN LIFE IS HARD

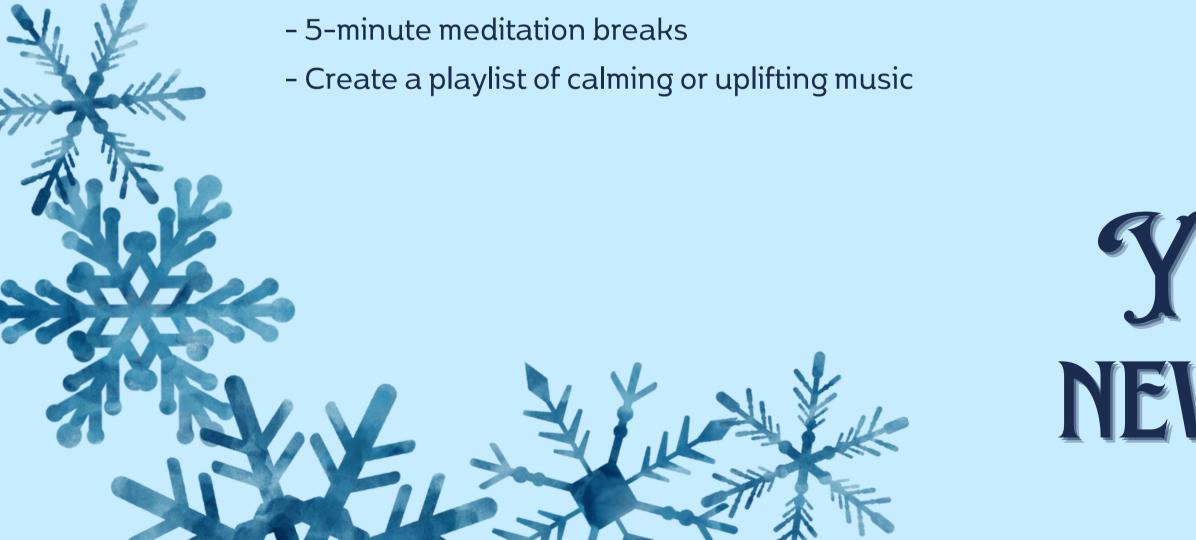
- Create a "hope jar": Write down small moments of joy or kindness you experience
- Set small, achievable daily goals to build a sense of accomplishment
- Seek out inspiring stories of resilience to remind yourself of human strength

#### **DEVELOP A GRATITUDE PRACTICE**

- Start a daily gratitude journal, noting three things you're thankful for
- Share your gratitude with others through calls, texts, or letters
- Look for moments of beauty in your home or community, however small

#### STRESS-RELIEF TOOLKIT

- Deep breathing exercises (4-7-8 technique)



E: EQUIP
YOURSELF WITH
NEW STRATEGIES!

# I: SELFCARE & CONNECTION

#### **CREATE A PERSONAL "HOLIDAY RECHARGE" MENU**

- List quick self-care activities for 5, 15, and 30-minute breaks
- Include free or low-cost options for financial accessibility
- Keep your menu visible and easily accessible

#### CONNECT WITH LOVED ONES OR SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

- Reach out to one person each day, even for a brief chat
- Explore free community events or support groups in your area
- If alone, consider volunteering or joining online communities

#### **SET AND MAINTAIN HEALTHY BOUNDARIES**

- Identify your non-negotiable boundaries for time, energy, and interactions
- Communicate these boundaries clearly and compassionately
- Enlist a supportive friend as your "boundary buddy" for accountability

#### **GIVE YOUR TIME TO SUPPORT OTHERS**

- Research local volunteer opportunities or community service projects
- Offer help to a neighbor or friend in need
- Create homemade gifts or cards for those who might be lonely

#### **CULTIVATE JOY IN SMALL, NATURAL WAYS**

- Take daily walks to appreciate nature in your community
- Start a small indoor garden or care for a houseplant
- Engage in simple, joyful activities like singing, dancing, or crafting

#### MEND STRAINED RELATIONSHIPS WHEN POSSIBLE

- Reach out to estranged family or friends with an open heart
- Practice active listening and empathy in difficult conversations
- Focus on building understanding rather than being right

# G: GENERATE POSITIVITY AND PURPOSE

# A: ASSESS YOUR &MOTIONS

#### **DAILY EMOTIONAL CHECK-INS**

- Rate your mood each day on a scale of 1-10
- Identify patterns or triggers affecting your emotions
- Recognize early warning signs of stress or overwhelm

#### **IDENTIFY YOUR PERSONAL HOLIDAY VALUES**

- Reflect on what truly matters to you during this season
- Align your activities with these core values
- Let go of activities that don't serve your well-being or values

#### **FINANCIAL WELL-BEING CHECK**

- Assess your budget honestly and set realistic spending limits
- Explore low-cost or free ways to celebrate and connect
- Remember that meaningful experiences often don't have a price tag



# L: LIBERATE FROM GUILT AND PRESSURE!







#### PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION AND GRACE

- Use kind self-talk: "I'm doing my best in this moment"
- Give yourself permission to say no to overwhelming commitments
- Remind yourself that it's okay if things aren't perfect

#### **LET GO OF UNREALISTIC STANDARDS**

- Identify perfectionist holiday standards you're holding onto
- Replace each with a more realistic, self-compassionate alternative
- Focus on the meaning behind traditions rather than flawless execution

#### **EXTEND FORGIVENESS AND HUMILITY**

- Reflect on any grudges or resentments you're holding
- Practice forgiveness meditation for others and yourself
- Approach difficult interactions with an open heart and mind

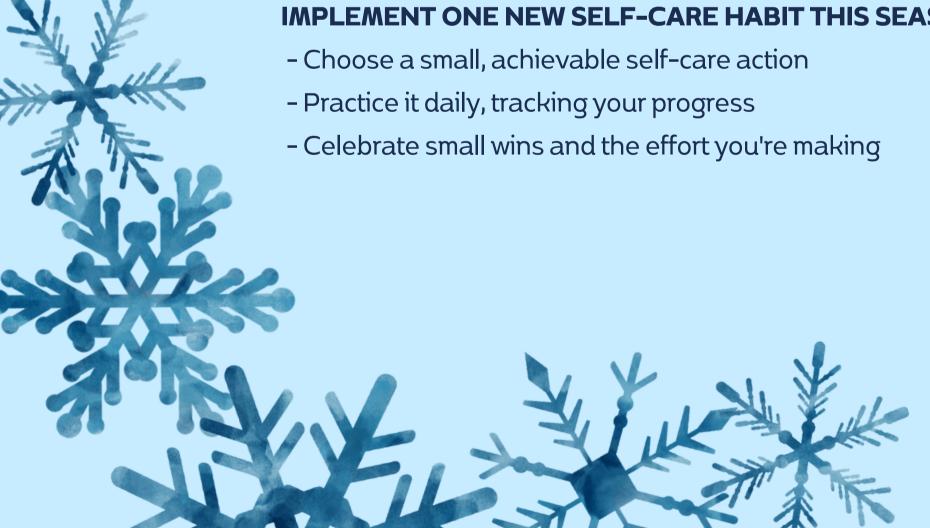
#### **CREATE MEANINGFUL, LOW-STRESS TRADITIONS**

- Brainstorm activities that align with your values and budget
- Start a new tradition focused on giving back to your community
- Involve loved ones in creating and implementing new traditions

#### PRACTICE MINDFULNESS AND PRESENT-MOMENT AWARENESS

- Create "present moment" cards with mindfulness prompts
- Take mindful breaks to fully experience holiday sights, sounds, and smells
- Practice gratitude for the present moment, however it looks

#### IMPLEMENT ONE NEW SELF-CARE HABIT THIS SEASON







## National Crisis Support Resources:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
  - Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
  - SAMHSA National Helpline: 1-800-662-4357

www.shawnjames-realign.com