



## Your Holiday Season Can Still Be Filled With Joy

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**With the COVID virus again on the rise, access to non-essential businesses being restricted and get-togethers and travel being discouraged, we have very difficult personal decisions to make particularly during this upcoming holiday season.**

Do we travel and get together with friends over the holidays and if so, how do we do so? Will we be hosting a holiday get-together? How do we do so safely? If we cannot physically get together, how will we celebrate our holidays and our long-standing traditions?

Here are some thoughts we have for ways to celebrate the holidays that may be different but safe. Try to celebrate in person with only those in your own immediate household. Additional family and friends can attend "virtually." It's not like being together in person, but you can still see each other and experience each other's presence and love. Put your laptop on the table so you can all have dinner together.

Here are some other ideas. Make cooking and baking a family experience. Get everyone involved, especially the kids. Try new foods. Have fun while you cook. Watch holiday movies as a family. Everyone gets to choose their own holiday movie. Remember popcorn is still tasty.

Go camping in your living room. Cook hotdogs and hamburgers. Remember you can make s'mores at

home! Turn off your phones and tell stories next to the fireplace. Have everyone in the family put together their own "What I Love About You" letter and share them with each other.

Focus on "Giving." How about putting together care packages for the homeless or nursing home residents? Donate to local food banks and healthcare organizations. Take a day to put together those clothes and other things you are no longer using and donate them to local thrift stores. Do a holiday "drive by" past local light and other displays. Try to think about those things you can do, not just those things you can't. Come up with new ideas and traditions.

Finally, you might consider recreating your religious service at your home with the clothes, readings, candles or food or drinks. Practice some of your favorite carols and then surprise the neighbors or grocery stores with holiday cheer! Dig deep into your family's culture and make some traditional meals you've never considered before. With the help of teenagers in the house, make a home video to post on social media or reenact a scene from a favorite holiday movie. The possibilities are endless here but you have to use your creativity and make it fun!

We at First Choice Health EAP wish you a wonderful holiday season. Please be safe over the holidays and be thoughtful of the safety of your friends, your colleagues and your loved ones. With your help and hopefully with the new vaccines, things will soon get better, and we will shortly be able to again live and celebrate as we have in the past.