

## Seasonal Survival Tips for a Calmer Holiday

The stretch from Thanksgiving through New Years can be joyful, but also stressful. Between gatherings, shopping, travel, and high expectations, even the happiest occasions can leave us feeling drained. Advertising and social media only add to the pressure by showcasing picture-perfect celebrations that few of us can live up to. This time of the year can also magnify whatever stressors we already face - loneliness, grief, financial strain, or family tension. The result: a season that's meant to be festive can quickly become overwhelming.

Our counselors suggest a few simple ways to make the holidays more peaceful and meaningful:

- **Be a giver.** Acts of kindness, such as checking in on an elderly neighbor, volunteering, or helping someone in need, can lift your spirits and strengthen your sense of connection.
- **Put down the phone.** During special gatherings, try a "no-electronics" rule and give others your full attention. Genuine connection is the best gift you can offer.

- **Keep expectations realistic.** Traditions and people change. Don't aim for perfection, aim for moments that matter.
- **Laugh often.** Humor is a great stress reliever. When plans go awry, choose laughter over frustration.
- **Set limits.** You don't have to say yes to every invitation. Protect your time and energy for the things and people that mean the most.
- **Practice self-care.** Stick to healthy eating, usual sleep routines, and take a few quiet minutes for yourself each day.
- **Let go of old grudges.** Forgiveness frees you to enjoy the present. It's a gift to yourself and to others.

The holidays don't have to be perfect to be meaningful. With care, humor, and compassion, you can keep the season bright for yourself and those around you. For more help getting through the season, be sure to check out our [2025 Holiday Survival Toolkit](#).

## Protect Your Wallet and Your Peace of Mind

The holidays bring joy along with a spike in scams. Fraudsters know we're busy and distracted. Every year, criminals get more creative with fake websites, bogus shipping notices, and "too good to be true" social media deals. Before clicking or buying, double-check the source: hover over links, verify URLs, and shop only through trusted retailers. Be cautious of urgent messages about account problems or missed deliveries - they're often phishing attempts. Use secure payment methods - never gift cards or wire transfers. When in doubt, pause before you pay or share personal info. Keep an eye on your bank and credit card statements by regularly checking for unusual activity. A little extra vigilance can protect your finances and your peace of mind. For more guidance, see the [Better Business Bureau's Guide to Holiday Scams](#). Don't miss their [Naughty List: 12 Scams of the Holidays](#).

## Featured December Webinar

### Family Ties

E-communications are great but insufficient! Connecting as a family on all levels is key to how children behave in social settings and later in life. Communication skills, dealing with life issues, and personal conduct are learned behaviors from parents and other family members. To access this Webinar and related resources, simply log in to [www.UnionAP.com](http://www.UnionAP.com) during December.

## December Training Picks

Whether you're rushing to complete personal goals for 2025 or looking to get a jumpstart on 2026 goals, there's a training course to meet your needs. Browse thousands of training topics for personal and professional growth. To get you started, we offer a few suggestions or search for your own themes. Simply click on "**Member Login**" at [www.UnionAP.com](http://www.UnionAP.com), sign in, and click on the comprehensive training library in the "**Training Center**."

- **NEW! Anticipate Problems Before They Happen | Course ID: SVL\_005293**  
Gain the tools to foresee challenges and mitigate risks before they arise. This 14-minute video course focuses on proactive problem-solving, scenario planning, and preparing for potential roadblocks.
- **NEW! Harness AI to Solve Complex Problems | Course ID: SVL\_005289**  
This 12-minute video course empowers you to harness AI for problem identification, solution design, and implementation, all while refining your human problem-solving skills. Discover how AI can enhance your ability to tackle challenges effectively and drive successful outcomes.
- **Generational Dynamics: Workforce Breakdown by Generation | Course ID: SVL\_1022729**  
By learning historical events and technological developments that impacted each generation, gain a better insight to improve your working relationships by understanding what shaped each generation's working style. This 9-minute video lesson is the second in a series of nine.

## We're Here for You 24/7

All of us at ESI Employee Assistance Group extend our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones for a season filled with good health, serenity, joy, and love. Stay safe and have a very happy holiday! If you run into problems, we are here to help:

- Our helpline and counselors will be available throughout the holiday season. Should you run into problems or need support, we're here for you!
- MAP services are available to you and your household members as well as dependent children living away from home, up to age 26.
- For emergencies, text or call [988 Lifeline](tel:988) 24/7/365 for free, confidential emotional support for people who are in a suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

## Key December Dates

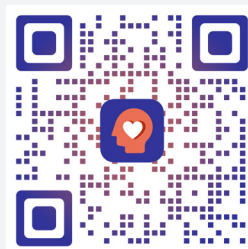
- [Safe Toys Month](#)
- [12/1 - World AIDS Day](#)
- [12/3 - International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [12/7-12/13 - National Handwashing Awareness Week](#)
- [12/14-12/22 - Hanukkah](#)
- [12/25 - Christmas](#)
- [12/26-1/1 - Kwanzaa](#)
- [12/31 - New Year's Eve](#)

## Scan to Learn More!

Explore  
More of Your  
Employee  
Benefits



Download  
Talkspace Go  
For iPhone  
Or Android



## Accessing Your MAP Training Center

1. Go to [www.UnionAP.com](http://www.UnionAP.com) and click the 'Member Login' button.
2. If you've already created an account, log in with your Username/Password.
3. If it's your first time, click **REGISTER** to create your Username and Password. *You only need to register once.*
4. Click the 'Training Center' and then choose 'Comprehensive Training Library'.
5. In the Search bar at the top of the screen, type the course code or search for a topic.
6. Click the course icon and click the 'Play' or 'Start' button to begin.

**To get a certificate:** View the course and take the quiz. Not all courses require a quiz, but if so, **you must score at least 80%** for a certificate. To download your certificate to your computer, click the ribbon icon below the right corner of the video.

### How to Scan A QR Code

1. Open the camera app.
2. Select the rear-facing camera in photo mode.
3. Center the QR code you want to scan on the screen and hold your phone steady for a couple of seconds.
4. Tap the notification that pops up to open the link. (You will need to be connected to the internet to do this.)

