Taking the Escalator®

The Holiday Survival Card

Quick coping strategies for your mental health and recovery

1 GO IN WITH A PLAN

Anticipate potential triggers. Decide how you will handle difficult people, uncomfortable conversations, and exposure to alcohol or other substances.

2 GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION

It's okay to say no, decline a drink, change the subject, set a boundary, or leave early. You don't owe everyone an explanation.

3 PAUSE BEFORE YOU REACT

When someone pushes your buttons, slow down. Take a few deep breaths. Not every comment deserves a response, and not every argument is worth having.

4 KEEP SUPPORT WITHIN REACH

Have someone you can call or text if you feel overwhelmed, triggered, or tempted to use substances. You don't have to handle everything alone.

5 TAKE A BREAK

Step outside, take a short walk, find a quiet space, or leave the situation if necessary. Have a safe way home.

6 LOOK FOR THE GOOD

Don't let one difficult person or uncomfortable moment overshadow everything else. Look for opportunities to connect, laugh, relax, and enjoy yourself.

REMEMBER: *You don't have to have a perfect holiday. Focus on making choices today that you will feel good about tomorrow.*

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