

Online Resources:

NAMI National and Nami-Delaware

General Info on dealing with holiday stress. <https://psychcentral.com/holidays/>

Dealing with holiday stress if you are living with a mental illness:

<https://psychcentral.com/blog/9-ideas-for-coping-with-the-holidays-when-you-have-a-mental-illness/>

<https://ibpf.org/do-you-have-bipolar-disorder-you-can-still-thrive-this-holiday-season/>

Books and Online resources from LEAP Foundation

I Am Not Sick, I Don't Need Help Xavier Amador

LEAP foundation: Free videos <https://lfrp.org/home>

Videos to share with family members to help them understand the illness:

Short video (6 minutes) Making a Difference in the Lives of Patients

Longer video: Living With Schizophrenia

Many other instructional videos on this site to develop positive communication

Book for families who have a loved one living with schizophrenia:

Surviving Schizophrenia: A Family Manual by E. Fuller Torrey

Tips from Norwood Coleman, Jr.

- PACES/PAGES:
 - Patience
 - Acceptance
 - Connection/Grace
 - Empathy
 - Safety
- Create new routines if old ones are disrupted
- Taking care of yourself models self-care to your children and also allows you to be more present for them

Tips from Dr. Meghan Walls:

- Start now – talk to your family as soon as possible about what the upcoming holidays are going to look like

- Focus on what we can do, not what we can't do, reframing safety necessities as a positive
 - Gives a sense of control
 - Example: "here's what you can do to keep ourselves and our communities safe"
 - Also gives them a reason to decline unsafe events
- Increase resiliency
 - Make an effort to ensure they maintain social connection, even through virtual means like Zoom
- Keep routines -> give some predictability as support
- Pay attention to warning signs (<https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Warning-Signs-and-Symptoms>) -> early intervention is key

Tips from Jill regarding all "marker days" aka holidays, birthdays, graduations, weddings, relatives' child birth, "markers" of growth/change that are difficult for individuals with severe & persistent mental illness (SPMI) and their families:

- Be:
 - Proactive
 - Intentional
 - Flexible
- Plan & discuss before the stressor event with the whole family
 - Factor in your family member's mental illness in your accommodations for the whole family
 - Help educate any other family members that don't understand and how best to communicate without judgment or guilt tripping
 - Consider all scenarios & memorize some Calm & Affirming Phrases for worst case scenarios
 - Ask the family member with the condition what they want to participate in & allow them to decline anything they don't want to do
 - Create an Escape Plan to keep them from becoming overwhelmed
- Keep things as simple as possible
- Be flexible & affirm all the family members regardless of situation
- Allow mistakes & forgiveness for healing