

## STRATEGIES

### FOR PARENTS ON MANAGING STRESS AND ANXIETY ABOUT THE UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

The upcoming holidays can be a time of joy and celebration, but it can also be stressful and anxiety-inducing, especially for parents. Here are some tips for managing stress and anxiety during this time:

^ **Plan ahead:** Make a schedule with realistic time frames to help keep you on track. Include what you'd like to accomplish before and during the holidays, including shopping lists, menus, meals, and holiday outings. This will help you stay organized and reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed.

^ **Set realistic expectations:** Don't put pressure on yourself or your family to have "the perfect holiday". Accepting in advance that not everything is going to go as planned, can reduce anxiety and lessen any unnecessary pressure we put on ourselves, our spouses, or our kids.

^ **Give your children responsibilities:** Encourage your children to help with holiday prep. This will not only help you, it will also help them feel proud of their accomplishments, and can help them feel more connected to the holiday. Ex: Setting the table, helping with the cooking or baking (if age appropriate), making place cards, putting up the sukkah, decorating the sukkah, etc.

^ **Communicate with your spouse and children in advance:** Talk openly about any feelings and concerns you or your children are having about the upcoming Holidays. Encourage your children to express their emotions and concerns. Ex: I'm excited about seeing my cousins, I'm nervous about

fasting, I'm overwhelmed by how long the davening is." Putting thoughts into words and receiving feedback can often bring anxiety levels down.

^ **Practice self-care:** Self-care is essential for maintaining physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Some examples include, but are not limited to, getting a good night's sleep, making sure you are eating and drinking enough, taking breaks throughout the day, going for a walk, taking in some fresh air, or listening to music or a podcast.

^ **Stay present:** Our thoughts and feelings have a way of wondering instead of staying focused on the here-and-now. Attempting to focus on the needs of the present moment (and not what needs to be done in three weeks from now) can make the here-and-now process more enjoyable.

By implementing these strategies, you can help manage stress and anxiety and enjoy the upcoming Yom Tov season with your family.