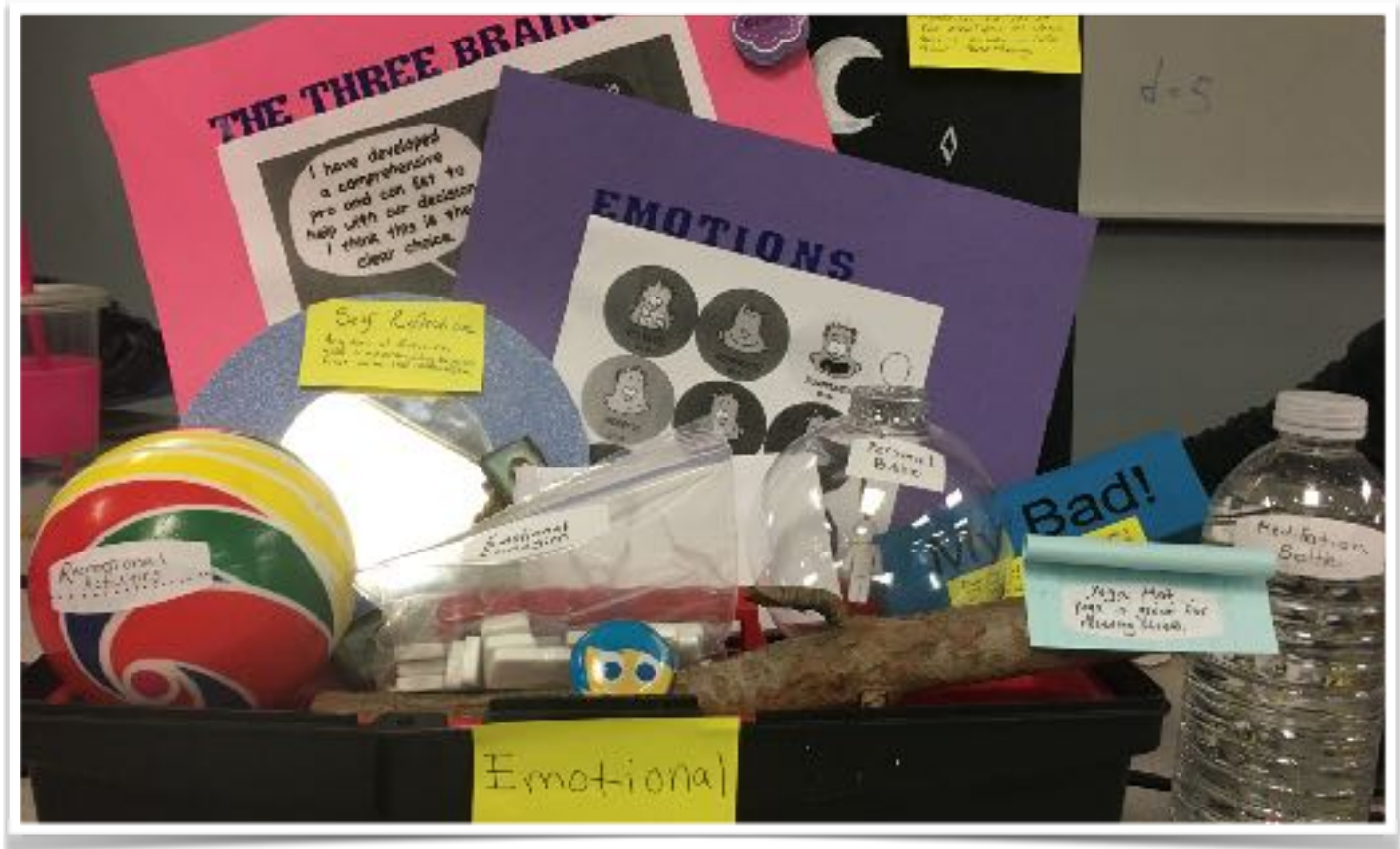


# Emotional Wellness



**“Develop ways to enhance the social and emotional health of individuals and families”**

The holidays are often associated with times of laughter, joy and family but for some, it can also be a time of tremendous stress, loneliness, or sadness. All of the gathering with friends and families can often trigger old wounds, unhealthy habits and unfavorable patterns. It is important for us to recognize the value of maintaining our emotional health and wellness throughout the year but during the holidays,

it can be exceptionally challenging. Here are a few tips for how to enjoy and thrive rather than just survive the holidays!

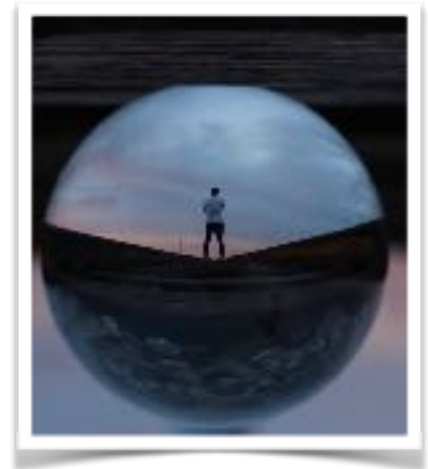
Most importantly, **take care of yourself!** We can't control other people or their behavior but we can choose how we respond. It's best to make sure that you are well prepared to handle any potential challenging encounters by taking good care of yourself.

Our Family and Human Services class at the Magnolia Student Center collaborated on a project that offers great tips for taking care of ourselves during this busy time of year. After studying the standard, "**Develop ways to enhance the social and emotional health of individuals and families**" the students made an "Emotional Wellness Toolbox."



The Mirror represents **Self Awareness**. Self Awareness is a pillar of social and emotional wellness. Knowing yourself, recognizing your triggers and your patterns is helpful so that you can employ strategies for navigating emotionally charged situations.

The Clear Ball- Notice the little person hanging inside the sphere? This symbolizes our **personal space and self care**. It is important to know your needs for physical and emotional space and it's healthy to honor that for yourself and to make your loved ones aware of your needs as well. Taking care of ourselves so we can show up and be present for others is a big factor in emotional wellness. Be aware of your needs, listen to your body and do your best to honor that.



The talking stick symbolizes **healthy communication**. Being an active listener as well as a clear communicator can have a positive effect on all of your relationships. Reach out to trusted friends or family members to talk about any challenges you are facing during the holiday stress.

The yoga mat is another symbol of the need to get quiet. Taking some time to **stretch and take some deep breaths** can greatly reduce stress that can often be carried in our bodies causing muscle stiffness.



The **meditation** bottle is a reminder to pause in times of stress and chaos. The time it takes to watch the flurry of glitter settle to the bottom of the bottle, is just enough time to reduce our stress and anxiety levels. Even 30 seconds of pausing can have a positive impact.

The cross symbolizes spirituality. Whatever your personal belief is, **taking time to be quiet and to reflect** is comforting during challenging times especially for those who might find the holidays to be painful because they are missing a loved one.

The ball represents **recreational activities**. Being active can help us to blow off frustration or stress in a healthy way rather than taking it out on others or engaging in unhealthy habits that only numb our emotions. It's also a great way to bring families together for bonding!



The sketch book offers another tool for those that prefer to express themselves artistically. This can also be journaling. Any opportunity we have to **express ourselves creatively** is a wonderful way to release pent up emotions. This beautiful color wheel was made by Zoe Collins, Family and Human Services student from the Temecula Student Center.



The dominos symbolizes **emotion contagion**. We are responsible for our own emotions and being aware that emotions are contagious can be helpful for understanding the power other's emotions have to affect us and how our bad day can have a domino effect on those around us. Be aware of what's yours and what belongs to others.

The big eraser symbolizes **compassion**. Having compassion for ourselves and others when we make mistakes is an important part of our emotional well being. We all make mistakes, we say regretful things in times of heightened emotion but remember to have compassion for yourself and others.

Practicing any of these tips can help not only during the holidays but throughout the year to help enhance social and emotional health of ourselves and our families. When we're busy it seems hard to imagine fitting anything extra in but even 30 seconds of pausing will make a huge impact and give you a better chance of enjoying these wonderful times with family and friends!

