

# Holiday tips for Mental Health

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# Self Care

## First Things First

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When you've experienced loss, trauma, or live with mental illness, the Holidays can make it harder to cope. Remember to take care of yourself! Do not neglect going to therapy, keep your appointments with your healthcare providers, get fresh air and sunshine, exercise, eat healthy, stay connected to others, reach out if you need support, and most importantly stay connected to Jesus and the Word. A healthy you will help the family remain healthy.

# Decorations

## Let Go & Simplify

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Remember that a calm mom who delights in a few things will influence her kids for the Kingdom more than an anxious mom who is focused on making it all look like the typical influencer on social media. We have one Christmas tree that I let my kids set up and they look at it with pride. It's perfect. I have a few other things around the home but it's nothing extravagant, and the decorations don't extend to a perfectly curated front porch straight from TikTok. No one has complained or said they wish we did more, but rather love the touches of festivity and have an energized mom who can give more of herself to them.

# Holiday Recipes

## Pick the Favorite

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Pick a few favorites and stick with that. My kids still mention their favorite Thanksgiving being during the pandemic in 2020 when it was just our little fam quarantined at home. We chose a few things to make and it was perfect. I have learned that togetherness and a calm, joyful mother is worth more than a stressed out mom tucked away cooking all day and missing them.



# Traditions

## It's Ok To Not Do Them

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Grief has a way of wrapping holiday traditions up in complexity, pain, and even trauma. When my mom died, I felt pressure to carry on her traditions, only to realize later in life that those traditions were more triggering than happy. Let it go. Your loved one who has passed on is not mad that you have stopped a tradition they taught you was important.

# Presents

## Just Wrap 'em Up Normal

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Listen. You do not have to stress over finding the perfect, elaborate, and most unique wrapping paper. just pick something up at the store and honestly, bows are even overrated. Simple is the way to go when anxiety is stealing your peace and joy. Oh and shopping online is a lifesaver!

# Family Photos

## Seriously, Let This Stress Go

Social media can put so much pressure on you to find the perfect outfits, perfect photographer, worry about the perfect weather, scout out the perfect location and to do this all with smiling children. As a photographer (which makes this one funny), it is no fun when stressed out mamas are yelling at their kids to smile behind the scenes. Let it go and snap a family pic at home with your phone. Trust me, your kids will cherish the memory surrounding that candid pic way more than the fancy session that caused everyone anxiety. My family has professional photos only every couple of years and it's so much better!

# Christmas Cards

## Totally Not Necessary

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I let this one go  
years ago and  
have never  
regretted it! We all  
keep up with each  
other online  
anyway. Enough  
said 😊

# Advent

## Consider the Heart Behind It

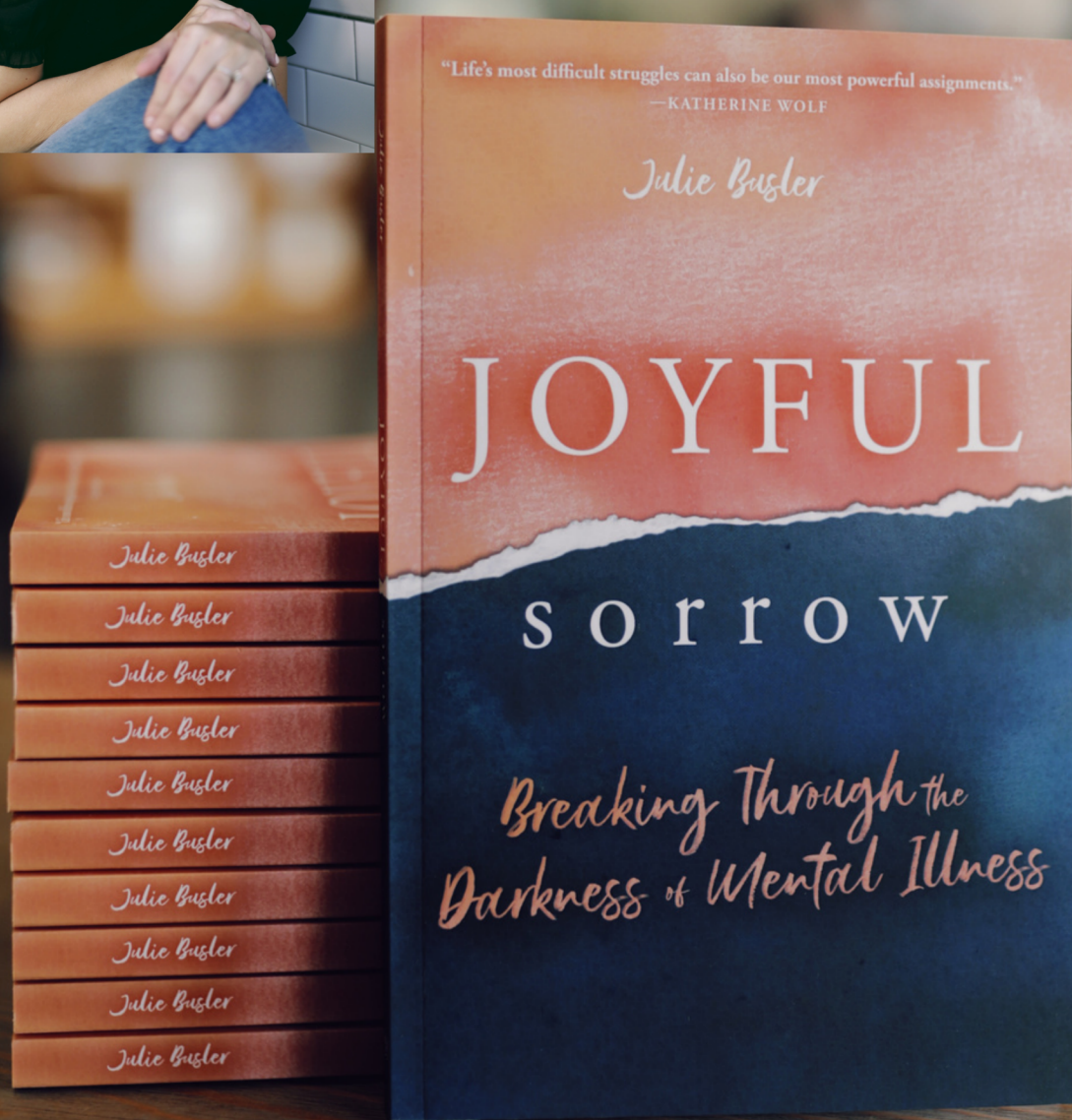
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I love Advent and looking forward to the coming of Christ, but you do not have to have a written plan that you make your family sit down and do every single day. We are to teach the commands and heart of God “again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up,” (Deut 6:7). As you are brushing their hair or filling up their plate, tell them the Christmas story.

Discipleship isn't about doing the perfect devotional, but teaching them devotion to Christ. Simple is still hugely impactful.



Don't forget to check  
out Julie's book..



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