



# Holiday *Survival* Guide 2018



# **Holiday *Survival* Guide 2018**

**Events, Strategies, and Resources  
for Maintaining Wellness  
through the Holiday Season**

An annual publication of Mazzoni Center's  
behavioral health program.

Cover photography courtesy of therapist Bob Pileggi © 2017

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## Emergency Resources and Contacts

### **Domestic Violence Counseling**

*Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline:* 1-866-723-3014

*Women in Transition:* 215-564-5301, 21 S 12th St #601, Philadelphia, PA 19107

**Hall Mercer Crisis Response Center (24 hours),** (215) 829-5433, 8th and Locust Streets

### **Mazzoni Medical Center**

1348 Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia PA 19147, (215)563-0658

(Non-emergency)

Walk-in psychological counseling, family medicine, family planning, HIV/AIDS services, Pediatric and Adolescent Comprehensive Transgender Services (PACTS), Specialty Services, Transgender Services, Walgreens On-Site Pharmacy.

<https://mazzonicenter.org/programs/medical-care>

**Office of Supportive Housing,** Emergency Housing Intake: 215-686-7150, or -7153

1401 JFK Boulevard, 10th Floor

Philadelphia, PA 19102

<http://www.phila.gov/osh/aboutus/Pages/ContactUs.aspx>

**Appletree Family Intake Center** (Single Women & Families), 215-686-7150

1430 Cherry Street

M-F; 7am-5pm

**The Red Shield** (After Hours Reception for Single Women with Families), 215-787-2887

715 N. Broad Street

After 5pm, weekends and holidays

**Station House** (After Hours Reception for Single Men), 215-225-9235

2601 N. Broad Street

After 4pm, Weekends & Holidays

**House of Passage** (After Hours Center for Women & Families), 215-471-2017

111 N. 48th St.

After 5pm, Weekends & Holidays

**Roosevelt Darby Center** (Intake & Assessment for Single Men), 215-685-3700

802 N. Broad Street

M-F; 7am-5pm

**Emergency Assistance Response Unit** (Walk-ins Welcome), 215-685-9087

5252 N. 13th Street

M-Th; 9am-3pm

**Adult Protective Services,** Information and Referral Hotline: 215-686-5671 or 215-686-5672

### **Cold Weather Hotlines**

Homeless 877-222-1984

Homeless Veterans 215-814-6888

Stray Animals 215-686-8686

**Emergency Shelter Programs:**

<http://philadelphia.pa.networkofcare.org/ps/services/subcategory.aspx?tax=BH-1800>

**Suicide and Crisis Hotline (24 Hours), 215-686-4420**

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**The William Way Community Center, 215-732-2220**

(Non-emergency)

1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

*Peer Counseling:* Monday-Friday, 6-9 PM.

By Phone, Walk-In or Appointment.

*Phone:* 215.732.8255

*E-mail:* [lgbtpeercounseling@yahoo.com](mailto:lgbtpeercounseling@yahoo.com)

*Website:* <http://www.lgbtpeercounseling.com/>

**Trans Lifeline Support Hotline, (877) 565-8860**

<http://hotline.translifeline.org/> (Availability posted online)

**Trevor Lifeline (24 hours), 866-488-7386**

FREE and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

TrevorText - Available on Thursdays and Fridays (4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. ET / 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. PT). Text the word "Trevor" to 1-202-304-1200. Standard text messaging rates apply.

TrevorChat - Available 7 days a week (3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. ET / 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. PT). Online instant messaging with a counselor.

<http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

**WOAR: Women Organized Against Rape 24-Hour Hotline (215) 985-3333**

Serving women, men, and the LGBTQ community

<http://www.woar.org/>

If You Decide to Report the Assault, Call 911 or

Contact the Special Victims Unit at (215) 685-3251

**Your Local Hospital's Emergency Room, Fill in the Address and Phone # Here:**

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Four Easy Tips for Handling the Holidays like a Mindfulness P.R.O.

From Bob Pileggi

More fully experience what delights you this holiday season through mindfulness, which is paying attention to life in this moment. Not only can it help us enjoy more, it can help us cope with what's challenging.

As we are aware of the symptoms that show up for us in challenging holiday moments (such as tension in the body, sadness, or self-defeating thoughts of not being wanted, for example), we have the opportunity to choose consciously how we'll respond. Mindful awareness can lead to healthy choices! Here are a few easy mindfulness tips for enjoying the holidays more, and for making empowering choices when challenges arise.

### 1. Savor your food

- Gobble gobble – or perhaps instead mindfully eat your first bite. Notice the smells, colors, flavors, texture...
- Starting out this way may satisfy you more quickly, and help prevent overeating...in addition to making the food more enjoyable!

### 2. Notice the delights

- Instead of rushing through the holidays, delight in them.
- Pause and take in the lights, decorations, the music – whatever you enjoy. Allow it to bring up feelings of joy or gratitude.

### 3. Shop mindfully

- Giving gifts to others? Or yourself (let's be honest about those holiday sales, right!)?
- Before buying, notice how it feels to hold this potential gift. Is it something that brings up joy, knowing that the other person will receive it? Or are you feeling compelled or stressed to get it just because it's such a "good deal"?
- Perhaps you'll end up enjoying the experience of shopping more, and not putting as big of a dent as usual in holiday finances.

### 4. Handle challenges like a P.R.O.

- When challenging interactions or emotions arise, consider following these steps to diffuse the challenge and to make a healthy decision.
- P – PAUSE: Notice that the challenge is happening; the emotions arising; the tension in the body.
- R – RELAX: Take a breath (or 2 or 3). Stretch. Back away from the situation a bit.
- O – OPEN: Open to the possibilities:
  - a) maybe things will be ok
  - b) maybe you are strong enough and maybe you do have other support (friends may be just a text away) to handle the situation. Perhaps access support and then move forward with a conscious choice.

## Handling LGBTQ-Specific Holiday Stress

The holidays can be a stressful time for LGBTQ people or families with LGBTQ members, but there are several strategies that you can use to help reduce stress and create a happy holiday this year. (from [PFLAG.org](http://PFLAG.org))

- **Don't assume** you know how somebody will react to news of your sexual orientation or gender identity — you may be surprised.
- **Realize** that your family's reaction to you may **not** be because you are LGBTQ. The hectic holiday pace may cause family members to act differently than they would under less stressful conditions.
- **Remember** that "coming out" is a continuous process. You may have to "come out" many times.
- **Don't wait** for your family's attitude to change to have a special holiday. Recognize that your parents need time to acknowledge and accept that they have a LGBTQ child. It took you time to come to terms with who you are; now it is your family's turn.
- **Let your family's judgments** be theirs to work on, as long as they are kind to you.
- If it is too difficult to be with your family, **create your own holiday gathering** with friends and loved ones.
- If you are transgender, **be gentle** with your family's pronoun "slips." Let them know you know how difficult it is.
- Take the lead in **setting boundaries** if there are topics you believe will be upsetting like the political climate or current events.
- It can be easy to lose ourselves – stay connected to who you are.

### ***Before the visit...***

- **Make a decision** about being "out" to each family member before you visit.
- If you are partnered, **discuss in advance** how you will talk about your relationship, or show affection with one another, if you plan to make the visit together.
- If you bring your partner home, **don't wait until late** into the holiday evening to raise the issue of sleeping arrangements. Make plans in advance.
- **Have alternate plans** if the situation becomes difficult at home.
- **Find out** about local GLBT resources.
- **If you do plan to "come out"** to your family over the holidays, have support available, including [PFLAG publications](http://PFLAG.org) and the [number of a local PFLAG chapter](#).
- **Make a plan with friends** – set up phone dates or video-chat dates, ask if you can email them and determine whether you would need an immediate response, balance out your obligatory socializing and more rewarding and enjoyable time
- Find out which friends or family are open to emergency phone calls.
- Have friends write you supportive notes that you can read during hard moments

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***During the visit...***

- **Focus** on common interests.
- **Reassure** family members that you are still the same person they have always known.
- If you are partnered, **be sensitive** to their needs as well as your own.
- **Be wary** of the possible desire to shock your family.
- **Remember to affirm yourself.**
- **Realize** that you don't need your family's approval.
- **Connect with someone else who is LGBTQ**—by phone or in person—who understands what you are going through and will affirm you along the way.
- **Take some alone time** – go for a walk, read a book, journal meditate, listen to music, exercise

**Have Boundaries!**

Discuss with friends you trust and/or therapist possible boundaries to have with your family. What do you need to feel safe? What is realistic? What's the difference between unsafe and uncomfortable and what are you willing to deal with? Some boundaries make and maintain for ourselves. Other boundaries have to do with other people's behavior – is it best to communicate these boundaries to the other person? What will you do if your boundaries are broken? Here are some examples:

- I will not tolerate it when my mother talks about my body in any way. If she does, I will ask her to stop. If she does not stop, I will walk away from her. I will communicate this boundary to her in an email before I arrive at her house.
- I will not allow my family to call my partner my "friend." We have been together for years and they are aware of the nature of our relationship. I will correct them when they say it.
- I will not drink alcohol with my family or be around them when are drinking heavily. If they start drinking, I will excuse myself politely and go to my room to read, call a friend, or go for a walk. I will speak to my parents on the phone before I get there to tell them this boundary.

**\*\*If you have a friend or partner coming with you – have a conversation ahead of time about what each of you would like from the other in terms of support. How will you ask for it? What would that support look like? What if the other person isn't able to give that support? Remember this could be hard at moments for both of you – be compassionate.**

**\*\*If you're staying the night...What to pack:**

- Be sure to pack things that keep you connected to who you are – photos of friends, a favorite book, maybe even your pet.
- Pack things that comfort you – special pillow, scented candle, favorite bath products, food that makes you feel good.
- Pack coping tools – books, journals, favorite music, walking/running shoes, guided meditation

***After the visit...***

- Connect with your regular support community on your way home or immediately when you get home.
- Plan a fun activity with your friends, circle of support back in your community, to decompress and enjoy some holiday cheer among your chosen family.
- Acknowledge and affirm yourself for utilizing your coping skills.

## Are the Holidays Getting You Down?

Holiday songs tell us "It's the happiest time of the year." While we like to think of this season as a time of joy, festive parties, warm family gatherings, and optimistic hopes for the new year, sometimes our idealized expectations are not met and we end up feeling anxious, let down, disillusioned, alienated, and/or stretched to emotional limits. Pre-holiday stress. Mid-holiday frenzy. Post-holiday letdown. Each of these, or the cumulative effects of all them all, can result in a case of the "holiday blues"--or even more serious conditions, such as depression or anxiety disorders.

### **Commonly-Experienced Causes of the "Holiday Blues:"**

Increased levels of stress are invariably cited as one of the biggest contributors to the "holiday blues." In addition to stress, some of the other oh-so-common factors that can lead to the "holiday blues" include:

- Fatigue
- Unrealistic expectations
- Feeling bombarded by over-commercialization
- Strained relationship issues that surface when families get together
- Differing views among friends and family, in particular related to issues of identity politics.
- Reminders of past losses of significant loved ones
- Sadness over the contrast between "now" and "then"
- Adapting to changes in family configurations and logistics for celebrating together caused by such new situations as divorce, marriage, blended families, adolescents who no longer celebrate the holidays as "children," and grown children establishing their own independent holiday traditions
- Financial constraints and demands
- The inability to be with friends and family
- Triggers and temptations related to food, drugs, alcohol, or sex.
- Residue stress from unfortunate past experiences during previous holiday seasons
- Tension caused by the additional demands of shopping in holiday crowds, heavier-than-usual traffic, entertaining, holiday baking, long-distance travel, family reunions and/or houseguests

## Useful Strategies for Keeping Stress to a Minimum

Oftentimes, people try to counter the emotional strain they're feeling by drinking more than they should, over-eating or even placing still further demands on themselves and going to bigger and more elaborate efforts to try and ensure their holidays are the best ever. Throughout the coming weeks, consider engaging some of the following strategies for getting around potential sources of the "holiday blues":

### **1. *Keep your expectations for the holiday season manageable:***

Be realistic about what you can and cannot do—as well as what you want to do and don't want to do. Although the holidays often mean trying to fit a lot of activities into a short period of time, pace yourself and, to the degree it's possible, try not to place your entire focus on just one day (e.g., Thanksgiving Day, Christmas morning, New Year's Eve), instead, remember it's an entire season of holiday sentiment and that activities can be spread out (time-wise) to help increase enjoyment and lessen stress. Set realistic goals for yourself; make a list and prioritize the most important activities; ask for and accept help; simplify!

### **2. *Remember the holiday season does not banish reasons for feeling sad or lonely:***

During the holiday season, there's room for feelings such as sadness and/or loneliness to be present along with other more joyful emotions. You may be feeling out of sorts and periodically out of sync with the season's "jollier" aspects because of a current stressor, for example, a recent romantic break-up, or dealing with an adolescent child who's expressing their newfound independence by not participating in this year's family traditions. When you feel down, avoid critical self-perceptions, such as thinking of yourself as Scrooge and, instead, try to articulate the understanding you need from those around you. You might also consider seeking the help of a therapist to help you sort out your feelings and deal with the troubling issues.

### **3. *Limit predictable sources of stress:***

If you feel the annual trappings of shopping, decorating, cooking and attending social events risk becoming overwhelming and stressful, use discretion and limit the activities you commit to.

### **4. *Don't fall prey to commercial hype:***

Advertisers would like to have you believe that "if you really loved your spouse" you'd give them that expensive new gadget or piece of jewelry or that you should be the "perfect Santa" and grant your kids' wishes for this year's pricey crazes. Recognize the ads and commercials as hype that manufacturers and stores have to do to benefit optimally from the season. You can show love and caring in lots of thoughtful ways which don't cost a lot and that make the holidays all the more meaningful and personal.

### **5. *Join a social group:***

Feelings of loneliness and isolation can often be remedied by participating in activities with others. This can also help in opening up the potential for making new friends. You might consider looking into groups affiliated with your local church, museum, library or community center.

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**6. *Get together with friends and family members:***

As much as possible, share the holidays with friends and family members in person, as well by phone, e-mail, and mail. The holiday season can also be a good time to contact someone you have not heard from for a while. If who have recently suffered the loss of someone especially close, spend time with special friends and family members with whom you can reminisce and share stories and warm memories about your loved one.

**7. *Attend holiday community events:***

Most communities offer special events during the holidays, such as theatrical and orchestral performances, that can be enjoyable to look forward to and to attend.

**8. *Engage in volunteer activity:***

Helping others is a pretty foolproof method of making the holidays feels more meaningful. There are many volunteer organizations that need extra help during this time of year.

**9. *Enjoy activities that are free:***

Financial strain can be the cause of considerable added stress during the holidays, however, there are many ways of enjoying the season that are free, including driving or walking around to admire holiday decorations, going window shopping without buying, and attending free concerts.

**10. *Don't abandon healthful habits:***

Don't feel pressured to eat more than you're accustomed to just because it's the holiday season. And, since many of the season's parties and social gatherings include alcohol, be aware that excessive drinking will only contribute to or increase feelings of overwhelm or depression. Alcohol is NOT an antidepressant and, in fact, often worsens mood.

**11. *Make the time to get physical exercise:***

Exercising, for example, aerobics, walking, skiing, hiking, yoga, or swimming, can help burn away a lot of stress as well as the extra calories of holiday meals.

**12. *Remember that life brings changes:***

As families change and grow, traditions often need to adapt to the new configurations. While you can hold onto certain family rituals, for instance, a certain holiday activity or preparing a long-cherished family recipe, some traditions, such as everyone gathering at your house, may not be possible this year. Each holiday season is different and can be enjoyed in its own way. Don't set yourself up for disappointment by comparing this year's holiday season with the nostalgia of past holidays.

**13. *Spend Time With Supportive and Caring People***

In all of the ways listed above-as well as any other opportunities you can think of that specifically apply to your life-it cannot be emphasized enough how important it can be to spend the holiday season in the company of supportive and caring people. Many have found that seeking the counsel of a therapist during this time of year provides just the kind of support and care that helps them with the many emotional issues that arise in response to the holidays. Therapy provides a safe, comforting, and confidential setting in which to receive the kind of help and understanding that can best assist in first relieving, then understanding, and finally recovering from the effects of any feelings of sadness, disillusionment or loneliness you may be feeling.

## The Effects of the Shorter, Darker Days of Winter

For some people, the shorter, darker days of winter are enough to bring them down. When this is the cause of "winter-time blues," it's commonly referred to as SAD, which is short for Seasonal Affective Disorder. The word "affective" relates to emotions, and for those who experience SAD, their emotions go into a tail-spin throughout the winter months, causing such symptoms as depression, fatigue, anxiety, chronic over-eating and social withdrawal that persist until Spring brings longer, lighter days.

If you feel down for days on end during the holidays, it's important to seek advice from a mental health professional as soon as possible, particularly if you notice that your sleep and appetite are affected. SAD is very treatable; even the most severe cases can receive almost immediate relief once treatment has begun.

### Could It Be Depression?

The demands of the holiday season can overload an already stressed, almost depressed emotional system. If you are unable to shake what you think are the "holiday blues," you may be suffering from depression. The difference between the "holiday blues" and depression is essentially based on the duration of the symptoms and the degree of severity. When symptoms such as the following last for two weeks or longer, it could, in fact, be depression:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood
- Sudden loss of pleasure and interest in activities that are usually enjoyed
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- Difficulty sleeping, or increased sleeping
- Behavior that is more nervous or agitated than normal, or more slowed and unresponsive than normal
- Complaints of being tired all the time and having low energy
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Persistent physical symptoms that don't respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, muscle or joint pain
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Thoughts of suicide\*\*

Depression is very treatable--but first it must be recognized. If you or someone you care about are experiencing any number of the above symptoms of depression, consult a mental-health professional as quickly as possible. Depression is not a sign of personal weakness; people suffering with depression cannot merely "pull themselves together" and get better.

If left untreated, the depressive symptoms will only continue on beyond the holiday season and progressively get worse, causing needless pain and suffering, not only to the person who is depressed, but also to those who care about them. Untreated depression can even become a life-threatening disorder as it persistently distorts thinking, making the individual feel more and more hopeless about themselves and life in general.

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The American Psychiatric Association reports that "80% to 90% of all people with depression—even those with the severest cases—improve once they receive appropriate treatment." Basic ways to treat depression include therapy, medication, and a combination of the two. There are therapists who are particularly skilled at helping those who are suffering from depression so that they're better able to enjoy a winter holiday season that's merry and bright and to look to the New Year with hope and optimism.

**\*\*Suicidal ideation is always a serious matter and should be immediately responded to by enlisting professional assistance, for instance, calling "911," and/or seeking help from a local suicide hotline (listed in your Yellow Pages under "Crisis Intervention Services"), and/or contacting a local mental-health professional.**

### **Some tips for preventing and combatting SAD**

Exercise, eat healthy, avoid heavy foods and food with preservatives, do your best to stick to a regular, daily schedule, get plenty of sleep (go to bed earlier and get up earlier to get the most hours of sunlight each day, if you can), keep the room dark when sleeping (even a little light can disrupt sound sleeping), don't look at computer screens just before bed

Spend time outside (bundle up!) surround yourself with bright colors, and lots of light (lamps, open windows) in your home and at work, plants, if you like animals, spend some time around them, practice self-care and engage in activities and hobbies that are enjoyable...

## Five Tips for Staying Sober Over the Holidays

December 3, 2008 by Hugh McBride

Staying sober can be challenging under the most “normal” circumstances, but when routines are interrupted and stress levels are increased, avoiding alcohol can be exponentially more difficult.

For some in recovery, the holiday season is a particularly trying time. Financial pressures, family stress, and the dramatic increase in social gatherings can tempt even the most resolute individuals. Though every person has specific strategies that enable them to pursue lifelong sobriety, the following are five common-sense tips that can help you remain alcohol-free throughout the holiday season:

### 1. PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Staying sober requires a one-step-at-a-time mindset, but that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t be looking down the road to prepare for the obstacles that may await you. From Thanksgiving to New Year’s Day, those obstacles may be particularly daunting, but with proper preparation they can definitely be overcome.

Dr. Larry Smith, author of the book *Embrace the Journey of Recovery: From Tragedy to Triumph!*, advises recovering alcoholics to plan “each and every day of your holiday” to limit the likelihood that you’ll encounter situations that strain your commitment to sobriety. For example, inviting a dependable friend or a member of your 12-step group to accompany you to a gathering where you know alcohol will be present can provide you with the support you need to stay sober.

In addition to preparing you for specific events such as a family dinner or company party, your holiday success plan should also incorporate more of a “big picture” philosophy to ensure that you get through the season with both sanity and sobriety intact. If you anticipate difficulties, you may want to schedule an extra session or two with your therapist or plan to attend more 12-step meetings than you normally do. Also, make sure that you continue to eat healthy and exercise regularly.

### 2. IDENTIFY YOUR TRIGGERS

Regardless of how long you’ve been sober, you need to remain vigilant for situations or events that may prompt you to take a drink. The holiday season is rife with triggers such as financial pressure, family conflicts, and large gatherings where alcohol is served, so your success plan needs to include strategies for overcoming these enticements.

If your family members traditionally follow Thanksgiving dinner with a football game and a few beers, you need to prepare for this ahead of time by either making other after-dinner plans or enlisting your family’s assistance to get you through those potentially tempting hours.

If the stress and arguments that accompany your family’s get-togethers threaten to push you back toward the bottle, you may have to make the difficult (but ultimately healthy) decision to skip these events or limit your attendance to just an hour or two until you have a firmer grip on your sobriety. Regardless of what shape your particular triggers take, don’t put your health at risk by exposing yourself unnecessarily or without proper preparation.

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### **3. CREATE NEW TRADITIONS**

Holiday traditions are designed to encourage a spirit of togetherness and continuity. But if these activities put your health at risk (and, if you are a recovering alcoholic, alcohol-dependent, taking even one drink does just that), then you need to create a new method for celebrating.

Some alternative traditions are simple to implement. For example, if you previously welcomed the New Year with a quiet evening at home, highlighted by a champagne toast at midnight, substitute sparkling grape juice and keep everything else the same. But if you're used to celebrating New Year's Eve at a local bar or popular nightclub, it would probably be wise to find another way to mark the year's passing, such as hosting an alcohol-free party or attending an event that is sponsored by your local AA chapter.

A great tradition to start this season is writing a letter to at least one person who has touched your life in a particularly meaningful way during the previous year. In addition to giving this person the wonderful gift of knowing that they have made a positive difference in your life, writing a letter like this will also benefit you in two distinct and important ways: by strengthening your connection with an important source of support, and by reminding you how far you have progressed in your recovery.

### **4. ASK FOR HELP**

When you were mired in the depths of alcoholism, you may have felt as though you were alone in your misery. But as you began to walk the path of recovery, you found that there were many others who understood what you were going through and were more than willing to lend whatever support they could to help you regain control over your life. During the holiday season, make an extra effort to connect with the members of your support network.

### **5. REACH OUT TO OTHERS**

One sad truth about our world is that there will likely never be a shortage of individuals who are in need of assistance. People who will be experiencing their first sober holidays, underprivileged youth, residents of homeless shelters, and those who are hospitalized are just a few of the many folks who could benefit from your expertise, your advice, or simply your company.

Volunteering to serve others is a fantastic way to take your mind off your own worries and problems, to give back to the community, and to remind yourself how valuable you can be (and how rewarding life can be) every day that you resist the urge to drink

<http://www.drugalcoholaddictionrecovery.com/?p=27>

## How to Plan Holidays in a Multicultural Family

By Laura Reynolds

Holidays are stressful enough but when you're dealing with family members from different cultural groups, you may have an added problem or two. Holidays are, by nature, times when families gather and bond. Deciding how and when to blend traditions in a multicultural family can be a challenge but your family will end up understanding its own traditions better and be richer for the addition of new traditions.

### Things You'll Need

- Holiday gathering
- Research
- Patience
- Willingness to compromise

1. Find out about your new relations' traditions. You may be more compatible than you think. Christians and Orthodox Christians celebrate the same holidays, just on different days. Certain holidays are country-specific, like Thanksgiving and Fourth of July. Find out which holidays have religious significance and what the others celebrate.

2. Share stories together and let family members share stories with the younger members. The story of Chanukah never failed to delight at our house, especially when accompanied by a new candle each evening on a little menorah commemorating the Maccabees given to us by a dear friend.

3. Agree ahead of time where and what to celebrate as a group. Plan ahead and be prepared to share with your in-law's family. It's best to be flexible and accept that there will be times that you just won't be able to be together. If you're open to new ideas and willing to compromise, you just might find

yourself being invited to another family's festivities.

4. Include family members in your family's traditions and participate in theirs. Some traditions are quite complex. Be open-minded and accept the validity of different cultural traditions. Be sure to find out how "orthodox" your new family member is--some families adapt easily, no matter how different.

5. Don't try to "universalize" everybody's tradition. Their value is that they are meaningful to its followers. Concentrate on the history and meaning of religious observances, rather than trying to reconcile beliefs. Understanding religious history leads to tolerance and tolerance leads to acceptance.

6. Accept the fact that some traditions don't translate well. Share what works and what makes your new relative comfortable. Leave adventures in dining to another time and serve "typical" dishes that everyone can enjoy. Find activities that kids can share and enjoy from each other's cultural background. The grown-ups will be drawn in by the laughter and fun.

### Tips & Warnings

Don't rush it. Beware of "overload." Don't try to tell--or learn--everything at one holiday dinner. Your new family member already feels like a minority. Concentrate on welcoming them as a member of the group.

Be aware of the climate right now around race and be mindful of the potential divide as well as finding opportunities to validate the experiences of others.

## Dealing with Bias: Tips for Surviving Bigotry

Excerpts from the SPLC's Article: [Speak Up: Responding to Everyday Bigotry](#)

Power and history come into play in such moments, affecting how comfortable or unsettling it feels to speak up. Who holds power in the family? Who sets the tone for family interaction? What roles do elders and children play, and how might their words carry more weight or impact?

And other questions take shape: Was bigotry a part of daily life in the home you grew up in? Do you continue to accept that as the norm? Do you forgive bigotry in some family members more than others? Do the "rules" about what gets said — and what doesn't — change from one home to another? Who shares your views opposing such bigotry? Working together, will you find greater success in speaking out?

Appealing to shared values can be a way to begin discussions at home or with relatives. Try saying, "Our family is too important to let bigotry tear it apart." Or, "Our family always has stood for fairness, and the comments you're making are terribly unfair."

### Dealing with: Siblings

**Honor the past.** If such behavior wasn't accepted in your growing-up years, remind your sibling of your shared past: "I remember when we were kids, Mom went out of her way to make sure we embraced differences. I'm not sure when or why that changed for you, but it hasn't changed for me."

**Change the present.** If bigoted behavior was accepted in your childhood home, explain to your siblings that you've changed: "I know when we were growing up that we all used to tell 'jokes' about Jews. As an adult, though, I advocate respect for others."

**Appeal to family ties.** "I value our relationship so much, and we've always been so close. Those anti-Semitic remarks are putting a lot of distance between us, and I don't want to feel distanced from you."

**Reach out.** Feedback about bias is sometimes hard to hear. Who is your sibling most likely to listen to? A spouse? A parent? A child? Seek out other relatives who can help deliver the message.

### Dealing with: Parents

**Speak up without 'talking back.'** Repeat information, removing unnecessary racial or ethnic descriptions: "What did the checkout clerk do next, Mom?" Or, "Yes, I like these mixed nuts, too." Subtly model bias-free language.

**Appeal to parental values.** Call upon the principles that guided your childhood home. "Dad, when I was growing up, you taught me to treat others the way I wanted to be treated. And I just don't think that term is very nice."

**Discuss actively.** Ask clarifying questions: "Why do you feel that way?" "Are you saying everyone should feel this way?" Articulate your view: "You know, Dad, I see this differently. Here's why." Strive for common ground: "What can we agree on here?"

**Anticipate and rehearse.** When you know bias is likely to arise, practice possible responses in front of a mirror beforehand. Figure out what works best for you, what feels the most comfortable. Become confident in your responses, and use them.

## Dealing with: In-laws

**Describe your family's values.** Your spouse's/partner's family may well embrace bigoted "humor" as part of familial culture. Explain why that isn't the case in your home; explain that principles like tolerance and respect for others guide your immediate family's interactions and attitudes.

**Set limits.** Although you may not be able to change your in-laws' attitudes, you can set limits on their behavior in your own home: "I will not allow bigoted 'jokes' to be told in my home."

**Follow through.** In this case, during her next visit, the woman and her children left when the father-in-law began to tell such a "joke." She did that two more times, at later family gatherings, before her father-in-law finally refrained.

## Dealing with: Stubborn Relatives

**Describe what is happening.** Define the offense, and describe the pattern of behavior. "Every time I come over, you tell 'jokes' I find offensive. While some people might laugh along with you, I don't. I've asked you not to tell them, but you keep doing it anyway."

**Describe how you are feeling.** "I love you so much, and I know you love me, too. I wonder why you choose to keep hurting me with your comments and 'jokes.'"

**Appeal to family ties.** "Your 'jokes' are putting unnecessary distance between us; I worry they'll end up doing irreparable harm. I want to make sure those 'jokes' don't damage our relationship."

**State values, set limits.** "You know that respect and tolerance are important values in my life, and, while I understand that you have a right to say what you want, I'm asking you to show a little more respect for me by not telling these 'jokes' when I'm around."

**Ask for a response.** "I don't want this rift to get worse, and I want us to have a good relationship. What should we do?"

**Broaden the discussion.** Consider including sympathetic family members — and not-so-sympathetic family members — in the discussion so everyone can work to help the family find common ground.

*(continued on next page)*

**Put it in writing.** If spoken words and actions don't have an effect, consider writing a note, letter or email. Often, people "hear" things more clearly that way.

### **Dealing with: Social Events**

**Address the speaker.** A simple comment — "I'm sorry; what's so funny?" — can jar someone from their rudeness. Or be more exact: "I'm sorry. I'm not sure I know what you mean by 'white trash.' Could you explain that term?" When faced with crafting an answer, the speaker may begin to understand the inappropriateness of the remark.

**Appeal to the host.** Party hosts have brought people together and often are the closest to each of the guests. Ask the host to rein in offensive "jokes" and culturally biased statements. In the above case, the man may have discussed the moment later, with his classmate, who then could have raised the issue with her family.

**Look for body language.** Did you see anyone else flinch when the comment was made? If so, approach the person and assess whether they know the speaker well. If so, consider asking that person to approach the speaker privately.

## Harassment, Hate Crimes, and Help

By Heather Doughty and Amanda Moyer

With reports of an increase in hate crimes since Election Day, a feeling of vulnerability has come over many members of the LGBTQ community as well as other groups that may be targets of violence or harassment. As we gear up for the holiday season and face the joys and stresses that often come together during this time of year, we may also be carrying an additional sense of uncertainty about our personal safety, the safety of our loved ones, and the safety of our community. This may make it feel overwhelming to know what steps to take if you do want to report a hate crime or how to get help if you experience harassment or a hate crime yourself. It can also be hard to think clearly in the moment about what to do next, so thinking ahead about ways to stay safe and how to seek help can be beneficial. There is no correct way to handle such a situation and what may feel safe for some, may not for others (for example calling the police). Whatever steps each of us may or may not take, let us make sure to seek out support in a trusted person or organization so that this is not something that will be carried alone.

### How do I stay as safe as possible?

*Remember that these are ideas for ways of staying safer. If you experience a hate crime know that it is not your fault.*

*(The New York City Anti-Violence Project)*

- **“Let someone know your plans for the night:** who you’ll be with and if plans change. Brainstorm in advance ways people can contact and support you.
- **Be aware of surroundings.** Locate public spaces and 24-hour businesses to seek help if you feel unsafe.
- **Trust your instincts.** If you feel threatened or unsafe, remove yourself from the situation as quickly as possible.
- **Use words** to alert bystanders and use your body to defend yourself or to get away.
- **Leave a trail:** let people around you know when you leave a place; text yourself or friends about where you’ll be; save e-mails and online messages.”

### What information is helpful to collect or document?

- A description of the person (clothing, build, any distinct features they may have)
- Location
- Vehicle information (license plate, make, model, color)
- Details of the events that occurred (What was said? Were there any witnesses?)

### How do I report a hate crime in Philadelphia?

*(Office of the District Attorney of Philadelphia)*

- “Contact the police immediately by calling 911 or go to your local police station. Call the Police Conflict Prevention and Resolution Unit (CPR) at 215-685-3693 or go to their offices located at 100 East Lehigh Avenue. The CPR Unit was established by the Philadelphia Police Department to investigate hate crimes and to assist victims.” *(continued on next page)*

**What legal aid is available to those who have experienced discrimination, harassment, and/or violence due to their LGBTQ identity?**

- **Mazzoni Center Legal Services**, 1348 Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147
- Contact 215-563-0657 or [legalservices@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:legalservices@mazzonicenter.org)
- **Transgender Law Center**, Oakland, CA
- Contact 510-587-9696 or [info@transgenderlawcenter.org](mailto:info@transgenderlawcenter.org)

### **NVC = Nonviolent Communication**

It is intended to reduce frustration and misunderstanding and deescalate emotional conversations. Here are some basics for using this process of communication:

*(continued on next page)*

**How You Can Use the NVC Process**



Clearly expressing  
how **I am**  
without blaming  
or criticizing

Empathically receiving  
how **you are**  
without hearing  
blame or criticism

**OBSERVATIONS**

1. What I observe (*see, hear, remember, imagine, free from my evaluations*) that does or does not contribute to my well-being:  
"When I (see, hear) . . . "

1. What you observe (*see, hear, remember, imagine, free from your evaluations*) that does or does not contribute to your well-being:  
"When you see/hear . . . "  
*(Sometimes unspoken when offering empathy)*

**FEELINGS**

2. How I feel (*emotion or sensation rather than thought*) in relation to what I observe:  
"I feel . . . "

2. How you feel (*emotion or sensation rather than thought*) in relation to what you observe:  
"You feel . . . "

**NEEDS**

3. What I need or value (*rather than a preference, or a specific action*) that causes my feelings:  
". . . because I need/value . . . "

3. What you need or value (*rather than a preference, or a specific action*) that causes your feelings:  
". . . because you need/value . . . "

Clearly requesting that  
which would enrich **my**  
life without demanding

Empathically receiving that  
which would enrich **your** life  
without hearing any demand

**REQUESTS**

4. The concrete actions I would like taken:  
"Would you be willing to . . . ?"

4. The concrete actions you would like taken:  
"Would you like . . . ?"  
*(Sometimes unspoken when offering empathy)*



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## How to Cope With Social Anxiety during the Holidays

By [Arlin Cuncic](#)

Knowing how to cope with social anxiety during the holidays is not easy. This time of year can be stressful for everyone, but for those with [social anxiety disorder \(SAD\)](#) the social pressures and obligations can become overwhelming. For those whose anxiety interferes with daily functioning, the holidays may also be an extremely lonely time of year. In order to survive the holiday season, there are things that you can do to cope with your anxiety.

### **Get a proper [diagnosis](#) and appropriate [treatment](#)**

If you are experiencing [symptoms of social anxiety](#) and are unsure whether they are signs of shyness or something more severe, make an [appointment with your doctor](#)<sup>5</sup> to discuss your problems. The holidays are a time when people make resolutions for the New Year, and it's a great time to get a handle on problems that may have plagued you for decades. Make a promise to yourself to get help. Coping strategies alone aren't enough to manage SAD -- you need proper treatment.

### **Be choosy about the social engagements that you attend**

If you receive invitations from people whose company you do not enjoy, it is OK to gracefully bow out. But, make sure that you still get out and participate in some social activities. Avoiding social contact altogether is a recipe for becoming more fearful.

### **Keep up your energy and keep stress at bay**

Ensure that you maintain good eating habits and exercise regularly. The endorphins released during exercise can have a calming effect on anxiety. Yoga is especially relaxing. Small animal studies even note that vitamins and minerals found in healthy foods can also help regulate anxiety (while it's not certain the same holds for humans, a nutritious diet can't hurt!) Make sure to get enough sleep and avoid stimulants, such as caffeine and nicotine.

### **Conduct some "social reconnaissance"**

Do as Bernardo Carducci of the Shyness Research Institute at Indiana University suggests and conduct some "social reconnaissance" before attending parties or gatherings. Learn who will be there and what they are interested in. You don't have to be an expert in every topic, but learning a little bit about people's favorite discussion topics will help you carry on conversations. Read the newspaper, magazines, or go online and learn a little bit about current events. Gather some jokes, and get up the courage to try one out.

### **[Try volunteering](#)**

If the holidays are a particularly lonely time for you, offer to help out at a local soup kitchen or distribute gifts to needy children. Volunteering gives you the chance to meet new people and work with them towards a common goal -- a great basis for new friendships. It also gives you something interesting to talk about if your social calendar includes parties or family gatherings.

*(continued on next page)*

**Use coping techniques when anxiety builds**

There are many [self-help strategies](#)<sup>6</sup> that you can use if you feel social anxiety beginning to creep back into your life. The holidays are a time of year when all emotions become magnified, and anxiety is no exception. [Practicing deep breathing techniques](#) and learning to control [negative automatic thoughts](#) are two great ways to manage anxiety during times of stress.

**Ask your family for help**

Having a great support system in place will make the process of overcoming social anxiety and managing your disorder that much easier. However, your family may not always know what it is that you need, and they may forget to ask during this busy time of year. Tell them how you are feeling and let them know [what they can do to help](#).

**Be the early-bird**

Have you ever arrived at a party or gathering when everyone was already there and felt like the outsider looking in? Not sure where to start or who to talk to? Try to be one of the first people to arrive at the next holiday party and meet people as they come in. This gives you a chance to ease into the situation and gradually speak to people, instead of being faced with a group all at once.

**Avoid using alcohol for "liquid courage"**

The holidays can be a dangerous time of year for those who tend to use alcohol as a coping strategy for dealing with social anxiety. Although one glass of wine, or a swig of spiked eggnog, might help ease pre-party jitters, overindulging will impair your ability to interact effectively with others. Set yourself up for success by planning ahead how much (or if) you will drink, and what [other methods](#)<sup>10</sup> you will use for coping with anxiety.

**Take time for yourself**

The holidays can be a particularly busy time of the year, and it's important to put your own mental health first. If family obligations tend to wear you ragged, make a plan for how much time you will spend with relatives and stick to it. Then, make sure that the time you *do* spend with family counts.

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## Detaching From Emotional Pain (Grounding)

It is useful to have a selection of grounding exercises that you can draw upon to keep your mind and body connected and working together, particularly for those times when you are becoming overwhelmed with distressing memories, thoughts and feelings.

People who have experienced childhood sexual abuse or adult sexual assault can sometimes be confronted by flashbacks or intense memories of what was done, to the point that they are feel as if they are back there, re-living the abuse all over again.

Grounding exercises are a way for you to firmly anchor yourself in the present.

The following grounding exercises are about using our senses (see, hear, smell, taste, touch) to build our mind and body connection in the present. In working through the grounding exercises suggested here, you might find one or two that work for you – remembering only to use the exercises that you feel comfortable with.

- Remind yourself of who you are now. Say your name. Say your age now. Say where you are now. Say what you have done today. Say what you will do next.
- Take ten breaths, focus your attention on each breath on the way in and on the way out. Say number of the breath to yourself as you exhale.
- Splash water on your face.
- Sip a cool drink of water.
- Hold a cold can or bottle of soft drink in your hands. Feel the coldness, and the wetness on the outside. Note the bubbles and taste as you drink.
- As you wake, during the night, remind yourself who you are, and where you are. Tell yourself who you are and where you are. What age are you now? Look around the room and notice familiar objects and name them. Feel the bed you are lying on, the warmth or coldness of the air, and notice any sounds you hear.
- Feel the clothes on your body, whether your arms and legs are covered or not, and the sensation of your clothes as you move in them.
- If you are with other people, and you feel comfortable with them, concentrate closely on what they are saying and doing, and remind yourself why you are with them.

*(continued on next page)*

- If you are sitting feel the chair under you and the weight of your body and legs pressing down onto it.
- If you are lying down, feel the contact between your head, your body and your legs, as they touch the surface you are lying on. Starting from your head, notice how each part feels, all the way down to your feet, on the soft or hard surface.
- Stop and listen. Notice and name what you can hear nearby and in the distance. .
- Hold a mug of tea in both hands and feel its warmth. Don't rush drinking it, take small sips and take your time tasting each mouthful.
- Look around you, notice what is front of you and to each side, name first large objects and then smaller ones.
- Get up, walk around, take your time to notice each step as you take one then another.
- Stamp your feet notice the sensation and sound as you connect with the ground.
- Clap and rub your hands together, hear the noise and feel the sensation in your hands and arms.
- Wear an elastic band on your wrist (not tight) and flick it gently, so that you feel it spring back on your wrist as it
- If you can, step outside, notice the temperature of the air and how much it is different or similar to where you have just come from.

<https://www.livingwell.org.au/well-being/grounding-exercises/>

## Other Resources

[AnxietyBC.com](http://AnxietyBC.com)

Education about anxiety and PTSD, muscle relaxation, grounding techniques

[DrPattiLevin.com](http://DrPattiLevin.com)

Grounding sitting, mindful walking, statements, breathing, and grounding objects

[Self-Help.Tools](http://Self-Help.Tools)

Breathing, calming smells, and grounding statements

## Breathing Exercise

### Reset Breath

- Find a comfortable, seated position with your spine relatively straight but supported\*, and close your eyes.
- Take two to three full, cleansing breaths, in the nose and out the mouth, to release surface tension. Your exhalation should be relaxed and free, allowing gravity to take the air out of your lungs. For best results, don't blow or force the exhale. The belly should be relaxed and unrestricted – give it a chance to hang out and be soft!
- Place one hand on your lower belly, the other hand on your upper chest and take 10 full, open breaths without a pause at the top or bottom.
- Breath intentionally, not too slow and yet not forced. Feel the breath rise like a wave, starting in the lower belly and flowing up to your upper chest. Depending upon the level of intensity you can perform this exercise three ways, increasing in intensity with each one:
  - a. In and out of the nose
  - b. In the nose and out the mouth
  - c. In and out of the mouth
- With the last one, you might even slightly purse the lips (like whistling) when doing open-mouthed inhalation – this exercises the diaphragm a little more. Again, the effort is on the inhale, the exhale should be relaxed and easy, not forced, as if you were letting out a sigh at the end of a long workday.
- For the purposes of this exercise, count up to 10-12 breaths, and after the last one take one more full, deep inhale, as full as you can, and hold at the top for a count of 5-7. LET IT GO. Exhale fully, relax your muscles and feel the release of all your tension, stress and toxins.
- Witness how you feel. After a few moments, allow your breath to reenter your body and return to normal. Give yourself 30 seconds to a minute to allow this exercise to integrate. When you are ready open your eyes, smile and return your consciousness to your body.
- This exercise may make you feel lightheaded or dizzy. Make sure you are sitting and your body is safe. Do not do this exercise while driving or operating heavy farm equipment. 😊 Again, you can slow down the effect by breathing in and out of the nose rather than the mouth – it makes it more manageable for people with extreme anxiety.

Some Mantras and affirmations you can say to yourself while you breathe.

Try one that you want to believe, even if you don't believe it right now:

“Relax, and breathe.”

“I am enough.”

“I am not my mistakes.”

“I matter.”

“It is okay to not be perfect.”

“Courage is not the absence of fear.”

“I breathe in strength.”

“Just because I think it doesn't make it true.”

“I am only human; I am allowed to make mistakes.”

“Mistakes are proof that I am trying.”

“This too shall pass.”

“I accept myself.”

“It is enough to do my best.”

“Today, I will positively impact someone's day.”

“You are worthy of love and belonging.”

“I don't have to have it together every minute of every day.”

“There is always something, no matter how small, to be thankful for.”

“Just breathe.”

“I might get knocked down, but I will always get up.”

“I am strong enough.”

“I am beautiful, I am worthy, I am enough.”



## Primary Medical Care

Mazzoni Center Family and Community Medicine offers compassionate, comprehensive primary health care services focusing on the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. With our own caring, professional staff, and through our partnership with Thomas Jefferson University's Department of Family and Community Medicine, we are able to meet the growing health care demands of Philadelphia's LGBT communities.

**1348 Bainbridge Street Philadelphia, PA 19147**  
***To make an appointment at our offices, visit our [web-based patient portal](#) anytime. You can also call the health center at 215-563-0658.***

Mazzoni Center Family and Community Medicine now has a [Patient Web Portal](#), to **request** appointments, referrals, and prescriptions, and access test results and medical records **24 hours a day** via a secure email connection.

### **Operating hours for the health center:**

Monday: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Tuesday: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Wednesday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with drop-in hours for youth aged 14-24 every Wednesday 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Thursday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Friday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

We thank you for your patience, and look forward to serving you!

Mazzoni Center currently accepts most major insurers: [click here](#) to view the full list. We also accept PA Medicaid and most PA Medicaid HMOs along with Medicare Part B. We DO NOT accept Health Partners, Qual Care, any OUT of state Medicaid, and Military/ Armed Forces insurance plans such as Tricare and Champus. For our non-insured clients we offer low cost copays on a sliding-scale, based on annual income and number of dependents. Please contact our office for more information. **All records are kept confidential.**

## TRANS CARE

Mazzoni Center is one of a handful of health care providers in the U.S. that offers comprehensive care and services specifically for transgender individuals.

Related medical services include:

- Primary medical care
- HIV medical care
- Hormone therapy and monitoring
- Family planning and pregnancy-related services
- On-site pharmacy
- Breast and chest health care
- Cervical cancer screening for trans men
- Pediatric & Adolescent Comprehensive Transgender Services (P.A.C.T.S.)
- Social support/community activities for trans youth and their families
- Referrals to trans-friendly providers and community resources
- Social Workers on staff to offer support and navigate services

Additional services are provided by Mazzoni Center's behavioral health and legal departments. And the annual Trans Wellness Conference brings 1000s to the area for hundreds of educational, support and experiential workshops.

To learn more about becoming a patient at Mazzoni Center, please call 215-563-0658

## Mazzoni Center Drop-in Support Groups

### Group Webpage

<https://mazzonicenter.org/programs/support-groups>

***Groups Meet at Mazzoni Center 1348 Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147***

### Recovery Groups

#### **Recovery Support from Addiction Group**

**What:** A drop-in support group for LGBTQ persons in recovery or thinking about beginning the recovery process. This group aims to support each individual's unique recovery goals and strategies, while increasing insight and self-awareness, along with an educational component.

**When:** Mondays 2:30-3:30 PM or Wednesdays from 5:30-6:30 PM at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

**Contact:** Kirk Parsons at 215-563-0652 x582 or [kparsons@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:kparsons@mazzonicenter.org)

#### **Recovery Support from Addiction Group for TG/GNC/NB People**

**What:** A drop-in support group for trans/gender non-binary persons who are considering recovery from addiction, or at any stage in their recovery journey. This group serves to support each individual's unique recovery goals and strategies, while increasing insight and self-awareness, along with an educational component.

**When:** Tuesday 6:00-7:00PM at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

**Contact:** Kirk Parsons at 215-563-0652 x582 or [kparsons@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:kparsons@mazzonicenter.org)

## Trans\* Groups

### **Evolutions: Transgender Support Group**

**What:** A drop-in support group for anyone identifying along the transgender spectrum (or questioning their gender identity). Please join us for support and psycho-education surrounding issues of gender, such as gender identity, gender presentation, and coming out to friends and family. This group provides a positive and supportive environment for people to explore their own evolution, as well as offer their support to others.

**When:** Thursdays 6:00-7:00 PM, at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

**Contact:** AJ Jones, LCSW at 215-563-0652, x545 or [ajones@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:ajones@mazzonicenter.org)

### **New Bois Club: Support and Resource Sharing Group for the Transmasculine Community**

**What:** A drop-in support and resource group for anyone along the transmasculine spectrum. This group provides a safe and supportive environment for FTMs, trans\* men and bois, and individuals assigned female at birth who are exploring masculinity. Join us for discussion, resource sharing, and psycho-education on topics such as coming into masculine identities, navigating within communities, sexuality, dating, coming out, medical transition, legal transition, aging, and developing/starting families.

**When:** Mondays 6:00-7:00 PM, at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

**Contact:** Nikele Riek, LSW at 215-563-0652 x281 or [nriek@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:nriek@mazzonicenter.org)

### **SOFFAs: Significant Others, Family, Friends, and Allies**

**What:** Are you the loved one of a person of trans\* experience? If so, you may have questions, fears, thoughts, and experiences that are new to you. SOFFAs is a place for significant others, family, friends, and allies to support one another through their own transition. Here, you'll find support, education, and safety to process your experience. Drop ins are welcomed!

**When:** Once monthly on Mondays from 5:00-6:00 PM, at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

\*Please check website for upcoming dates

**Contact:** Katie Schank at 215-563-0652 x253 or [kschank@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:kschank@mazzonicenter.org)

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## HIV/AIDS and STD Testing and Counseling

### HIV and STD Testing

**Walk-in HIV and STD Screening at Washington West Project** 1201 Locust Street Philadelphia, PA 19107

Schedule: <https://mazzonicenter.org/programs/rapid-hiv-testing-std-screening>

Receive free & confidential HIV/STI Screenings, no appointment necessary.

Call for more information 215-985-9206.

Holiday closures: Thanksgiving Nov. 23-26, Christmas Dec. 24-26, New Years Dec. 31- Jan. 2

**Philly AIDS Thrift On-Site HIV Testing Center**, 710 S. 5th Street.2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19147

Walk-in times: 4th Saturday of every month: 12:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m

### HIV Testing and Counseling

**Philadelphia FIGHT**, 1233 Locust Street, 3rd floor, 215.985.4448 ext. 230

Walk-in times: **Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am-5pm; Tuesday and Thursdays from 9am-7pm, and Wednesday late-nights from 8pm-1AM.**

**Action Wellness Center City Annex**, 1026 Arch St, Philadelphia PA 19107, 267-940-5515

Walk-in times:

Monday: 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Thursday: 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Action Wellness West**, 3901 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19104 (Entrance on Filbert Street)

Walk-in times: Friday: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

<https://www.actionwellness.org/services/testing-prevention/>

## 12-Step AA and NA Recovery Meetings

### Online Directory:

<http://www.philadelphiaroundup.org/?q=meetings>

*This list is not authorized, produced, approved or endorsed by AA, any AA Inter-Group or any of the listed meetings. Some of these groups may have chosen not to officially list themselves as gay special-interest groups.*

### Mondays

#### Philadelphia

**5:30 - 6:30 PM - EARLY NIGHT OUT - OD - LGBT mixed**

Washington West Center, NW corner 12th and Locust, 2nd Fl. Enter on 12th St side. AA logo on door. Arrive early if you want a seat.

**7:30 PM - Philadelphia Gay & Lesbian Group BEGINNERS MEETING (D27) OD**

Trinity Episcopal Ch., 2212 Spruce St.

**8:30 PM - SOBER & GAY (D27) OS**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**11:30 PM - NIGHT OWL (Step, Last Mon Tradition) (D27) OD**

William Way Center Lobby, 1315 Spruce St.

#### Allentown, PA

**7:30 PM - RAINBOW GROUP (Gay/Lesbian Meeting) OD**

Church of the Mediator (upstairs) 1620 Turner St.

#### Haverford, PA

**8:00 PM - Lesbian & Gay Open Meeting**

562 Clubhouse, 562 W. Lancaster Ave., Haverford, PA

#### Lambertville, NJ

**8:00 PM - LAMBERTVILLE (D21)**

Phillips-Barber Family Health Center

### Tuesdays

#### Philadelphia

**5:30 – CMA**

William Way Center, 1315 Spruce Street

**5:30 - 6:30 PM - EARLY NIGHT OUT - OD - LGBT mixed**

Washington West Center, NW corner 12th and Locust, 2nd Fl. Enter on 12th St side. AA logo on door. Arrive early if you want a seat.

**8:30 PM - SOBER & GAY (D27) OB**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**11:30 PM - NIGHT OWL (Came To Believe) (D27) OD**

William Way Center Lobby, 1315 Spruce St.

### Wednesdays

#### Philadelphia

**5:30 - 6:30 PM - EARLY NIGHT OUT - OD - LGBT mixed**

Washington West Center, NW corner 12th and Locust, 2nd Fl. Enter on 12th St side. AA logo on door. Arrive early if you want a seat.

**7:30 PM - YOUNG PEOPLE'S**

LGBT friendly (very mixed)

St. Mark's Church between 16th and 17th on Locust. Entrance in middle of block, thru the courtyard and up middle stairs.

**8:30 PM - SOBER & GAY (D27) OB**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**11:30 PM - NIGHT OWL (Big Book) (D27) OD**

William Way Center Lobby, 1315 Spruce St.

#### Reading, PA

**8:00 PM - LIVE & LET LIVE(Gays in AA) D-33. St.**

Mary's Episcopal Church, Front & Windsor St., Reading, PA

**Delaware, North Wilmington**

**7:00 PM Sober & Gay Alcoholic Group - CD**  
Concord Presbyterian Church  
Foulk and Murphy Roads

**Thursdays**

**Philadelphia**

**5:30 - 6:30 PM - EARLY NIGHT OUT - OD - LGBT mixed**

Washington West Center, NW corner 12th and Locust, 2nd Fl. Enter on 12th St side. AA logo on door. Arrive early if you want a seat.

**8:00 PM - COMMUNITY (D27) OD**

Holy Communion Church 2111 Sansom St.

**8:30 PM - SOBER & GAY (D27) OD**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**11:30 PM - NIGHT OWL (Topic) (D27) OD**

William Way Center Lobby, 1315 Spruce St.

**Allentown, PA**

**7:30 PM RAINBOW GROUP GAY & LESBIAN OD**

Church of the Mediator (upstairs) 1620 Turner Street.

**Fridays**

**Philadelphia**

**5:30 - 6:30 PM - EARLY NIGHT OUT - OD - LGBT mixed**

Washington West Center, NW corner 12th and Locust, 2nd Fl. Enter on 12th St side. AA logo on door. Arrive early if you want a seat.

**7:00 PM - BASICS GROUP (NA Meeting)**

Washington West Project, 1201 Locust St. 2nd floor (enter on 12th)

**7:00 PM - CHESTNUT HILL LGBTQ - Open Literature**

Chestnut Hill United Methodist Church, 8812 Germantown Avenue

**7:30 PM - ACCEPTANCE (D27) OB**

Trinity Episcopal Ch., 22nd & Spruce Sts.

**8:30 PM - SOBER & GAY (D27) OD**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**11:30 PM - NIGHT OWL (Speaker) (D27) OD**

William Way Center Lobby, 1315 Spruce St.

**Doylestown, Bucks County, PA**

**8:00 PM - Doylestown Gay Men's Discussion Group. Closed AA Discussion Meeting**

Pine & E. Oakland Sts. - St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

Meeting Notes: Park in back church parking lot.

Meeting usually meets upstairs through the kitchen.

**Westmont, NJ**

**7:00 PM - AA WORDS & WISDOM OBB - LGBT mixed**

215 Highland Av

**Lambertville, NJ**

**8:00 PM Gay AL-ANON (Step Meeting)**

St. Andrews Hall - 50 York St.

Held in basement

**New Brunswick, NJ**

**8:30 PM - LESBIAN AA**

St. Peter's Church

100 Rochelle Avenue, Rochelle Park

**Delaware, Pike Creek**

**8:00 PM - Solutions Group - OD**

Limestone Presbyterian Church

Rt. 7 (Limestone Rd.) North of Milltown Rd.

**Saturdays**

**Philadelphia**

**11:30 - 12:30 - BLUE SKY - LGBT mixed**

Holy Trinity Church, 1904 Walnut St.

**12:00 NOONERS (D27) OD**

Recovery Clubhouse, 2nd Floor, 1315 Spruce St.

Living Sober

**5:30 - 6:30 PM - EARLY NIGHT OUT - OD - LGBT mixed**

Washington West Center, NW corner 12th and Locust, 2nd Fl. Enter on 12th St side. AA logo on door. Arrive early if you want a seat.

**7:00 PM - STEPS & MEDITATION GROUP OF NA**

St. Augustine Church, basement  
4th & New St. (243 N. Lawrence)

**7:30 PM - PLUS FIVE & STILL ALIVE (D27) CD**

Trinity Episcopal, 2212 Spruce St.

**8:30 PM - LIVING SOBER**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**9:30 PM - YOUNG PEOPLE'S**

LGBT friendly (very mixed)  
St. Mark's Church between 16th and 17th on  
Locust entrance in middle of block, thru the  
courtyard and up middle stairs.

**11:30 PM - NIGHT OWL (Beginners) (D27) OD**

William Way Center Lobby, 1315 Spruce St.

**Voorhees, NJ**

**Saturday - 7:00 PM - Live & Let Live!**

Centers for Family Services  
108 Somerdale Road, Voorhees, NJ

**New Hope, Bucks County**

**6:00 PM - BUCK'S COUNTY LESBIAN MEETING  
CD**

Thompson Memorial Church, 1680 Aquatong  
Rd., New Hope, PA

**Poconos, PA**

**4:00 PM - RAINBOW MOUNTAIN RESORT**

210 Mount Nebo Road, East Stroudsburg, PA

**Broomall, Delaware County, PA**

**7:00 PM - CHOSEN FEW (D54) OD**

Grace Lutheran Church, West Chester Pike,  
Broomall (Rt. 3-off exit #9 of the Blue Route)

**Warrington, PA**

**8:00 - 9:15 PM - UP THE CREEK (D23) OD**

Bux-mont Unitarian Universalist Church,  
Route. 611 & Street Rd.

**Sundays**

**Philadelphia**

**10:00 AM – NA**

William Way Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 1315 Spruce  
Street

**11:00 AM - NO OTHER WAY OUT (D27)**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**12:30 - 1:30 - BLUE SKY - LGBT mixed**

Basement of the Ethical Society.  
Across from the SW corner of Rittenhouse  
Square.

**5:30 - 6:30 PM - EARLY NIGHT OUT - OD - LGBT  
mixed**

Washington West Center, NW corner 12th and  
Locust, 2nd Fl. Enter on 12th St side. AA logo on  
door. Arrive early if you want a seat.

**5:30 PM - WEST PHILADELPHIA (AA)**

257 S. 45th St Phila PA 19104

**8:30 PM - SOBER & GAY (Came To Believe)  
(D27) OD**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**11:30 PM - NIGHT OWL (Living Sober) (D27) OD**

William Way Center, 2nd FL, 1315 Spruce St.

**Laurel Springs, NJ**

**7:00 PM - S.J. Gay Group (open) - LGBT mixed**

Church of The Atonement, 215 Fairmount Ave.  
SP - 1st Sun. / ST - 2nd Sun. / Living Sober - 3rd  
Sun / OD - 4th Sun.

## GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)**

215-923-7900  
444 North 3rd Street  
Suite #3E  
Philadelphia, PA 19123  
[www.sepennaa.org](http://www.sepennaa.org)  
[manager@sepennaa.org](mailto:manager@sepennaa.org)

**Narcotics Anonymous (NA)**

(215)745-9494  
[www.naworks.org](http://www.naworks.org)

**Overeaters Anonymous (OA)**

(215) 674-4418  
<http://oa-phila.org/>

**Al-Anon**

4021 Walnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104  
(215) 222-5244  
<http://al-anon.org/find-a-meeting>

**Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA)**

24-hour CMA Helpline:  
(855) 638-4373  
<http://www.phillycma.org/>

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## 12-Step CMA (Crystal Meth Anonymous) Recovery Meetings

### Online Directory:

<https://crystalmeth.org/cma-meetings/meeting-search/search/results.html>

### Monday Philly Group

**Start Time:** 5:30pm  
William Way Center  
1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

### Tuesday Philly Group

**Start Time:** 7:00pm  
William Way Center  
1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

### Wednesday Philly

**Start Time:** 7:00pm  
William Way Center  
1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

### Thursday Philly

**Start Time:** 5:30pm  
William Way Center  
1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

### Friday Philly

**Start Time:** 7:00pm  
William Way Center  
1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

### Saturday Evening

**Start Time:** 7:00pm  
William Way Center  
1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

### Sunday Evening

**Weekday:** Sunday  
**Start Time:** 7:00pm  
William Way Center  
1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

## Non 12-Step Recovery Meetings

### Recovery Groups

#### Recovery Support from Addiction Group

**What:** A drop-in support group for LGBTQ persons in recovery or thinking about beginning the recovery process. This group aims to support each individual's unique recovery goals and strategies, while increasing insight and self-awareness, along with an educational component.

**When:** Mondays 2:30-3:30 PM or Wednesdays at 5:30-6:30 PM, at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

**Contact:** Kirk Parsons at 215-563-0652 x582 or [kparsons@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:kparsons@mazzonicenter.org)

#### Recovery Support from Addiction Group for TG/GNC/NB People

**What:** A drop-in support group for trans/gender non-binary persons who are considering recovery from addiction, or at any stage in their recovery journey. This group serves to support each individual's unique recovery goals and strategies, while increasing insight and self-awareness, along with an educational component.

**When:** Tuesday 6:00-7:00PM at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

### Online Support

[www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org)

SMART Recovery's 4-Point Program® helps people recover from all types of addictive behaviors, including: alcoholism, drug abuse, substance abuse, drug addiction, alcohol abuse, gambling addiction, cocaine addiction, and addiction to other substances and activities.

SMART Recovery (Self-Management and Recovery Training) is not a 12-step group, like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or Narcotics Anonymous (NA).

SMART Recovery sponsors face-to-face meetings around the world, and daily online meetings. In addition, our online message board and 24/7 chat room are excellent forums to learn about SMART Recovery and obtain addiction recovery support.

Please note that registration at message board is required for online meetings.

## Overeaters Anonymous Meetings

**Online Directory:** [http://oa-phila.org/pdfs/Current-OA-Mtg-List\\_100416.pdf](http://oa-phila.org/pdfs/Current-OA-Mtg-List_100416.pdf)

### Monday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00pm  
First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Mary C., 215-339-9405

### Tuesday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00pm  
First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Beth, 215-339-9405

**Center City:** 5:30pm  
Stephen Klein Wellness Center  
2144 Cecil B Moore Ave. Phila, PA 19121  
Contact: Bella, 267-596-3071

### Wednesday Groups

**North Philadelphia:** 11:00am  
Circle of Hope Church, "We Are Never Alone"  
(room closest to the stairwell)  
2007 Frankford Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19125  
Contact: Jodie K., 267-752-3779

**Center City:** 12:00pm  
First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Mary C., 215-339-9405

**Fairmount:** 8:00pm  
Brewerytown Fairmont Clubhouse  
"Stepping to Recovery"  
2044 Fairmount Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19130  
Contact: Julie Z., 207-431-7809

### Thursday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00pm  
First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Mary C., 215-339-9405

**Center City:** 5:30pm  
Church of the Holy Trinity, "Recovery on Rittenhouse"  
(enter from Walnut)  
19<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Sts. Phila, PA 19103  
Contact: Judy, 484-574-7374

**Mount Airy:** 7:00pm  
Grace Epiphany Episcopal Church  
224 E. Gowen Ave, Philadelphia PA 19119  
Contact: Emily M, 202-503-8464

### Friday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00pm  
First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Michelle, 856-298-6278

**NE Philadelphia:** 6:00 pm  
Nazareth Hospital, "Attitude of Gratitude"  
Marian Building, Room A (front desk for help)  
2601 Holme Ave, Philadelphia PA 19152  
Contact: Hannah, 215-745-9661

**Center City:** 7:00 pm  
Hahnemann Hospital, "A Power Greater Than Ourselves"  
(Picture ID needed to enter)  
245 N 15<sup>th</sup> St, Philadelphia PA 19102  
Contact: Enrique, 267-632-1030

**Saturday Groups**

**Roxborough:** 10:00 am  
Roxborough Memorial Hospital, “Step-a-Month Meeting” (conference room A)  
Ridge Ave & Jamestown Rd., Phila PA 19128  
Contact: Steve, 910-231-2047

**Sunday Groups**

**NE Philadelphia:** 10:30 am  
Nazareth Hospital, “The Twelve Promises”  
Marian Building, Conference Room 1  
2601 Holme Ave, Philadelphia PA 19152  
Contact: Hannah, 215-745-9661

**Center City:** 12:00 pm  
William Way Community Center, “OA in the Moment” (call ahead for handicap access)  
1315 Spruce St., Philadelphia PA 19152  
Contact: Judy, 484-574-7374

**Roxborough:** 6:00 pm  
Roxborough Memorial Hospital, “Sunday Serenity” (conference room B)  
Ridge Ave & Jamestown Rd., Phila PA 19128  
Contact: Minde, 215-836-2884

# Religious and Spiritual LGBTQ

## DIRECTORIES

### Christian LGBTQ-affirming Church Directory

[http://www.gaychurch.org/find\\_a\\_church/](http://www.gaychurch.org/find_a_church/)

### Friends / Quakers

Directory: [www.quaker.org/meetings.html](http://www.quaker.org/meetings.html)

Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns:

<http://flgbtqc.quaker.org/index.html>

### Jewish LGBTQ-Friendly Resource Guide

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1H6jbWFu1qhnoR0gLn\\_u6r0H4zVI9sXJ0f6WvZrBsUSo/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1H6jbWFu1qhnoR0gLn_u6r0H4zVI9sXJ0f6WvZrBsUSo/edit)

*The following is not a comprehensive list. Feel free to contact us with updates or suggestions!*

## BAPTIST

### Central Baptist Church

Welcoming and affirming church holds services 10:45 a.m. Sundays at 106 W. Lancaster Ave., Wayne; 610-688-0664.

### Drexel Hill Baptist Church

Non-judgmental Christian congregation affiliated with American Baptist Churches of the USA holds services 11 a.m. Sundays at 4400 State Rd, Drexel Hill; 610-259-2356

### First Baptist Church

Welcoming and affirming church holds services 11 a.m. Sundays at 123 S. 17th St.; 215-563-3853.

## BUDDHIST

**Queer Sangha**, 2030 Sansom St. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103, (215) 568-6070

An open public meditation group at the Philadelphia Shambhala Center for the LGBTQ\* community. Please join us for social time with tea and light snacks, sitting/walking meditation, and group discussion.

Third Thursday of the month 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

No previous meditation experience is necessary; basic meditation instruction will also be provided. This is a FREE program. Suggested donation is \$5-10; no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Pre-registration is optional, though helpful for planning purposes. Please contact Anna for info [murphey@gmail.com](mailto:murphey@gmail.com)

<http://philadelphia.shambhala.org/program-details/?id=223686>

### Rainbow Buddhist Meditation Group

Meets at 5 p.m. Sundays at the William Way Center.

## CATHOLIC

### Dignity Jersey Shore

An organization for sexual-minority Catholics meets the first Saturday of the month in Asbury Park. For time and location, call 732-502-0305.

### **Dignity Metro NJ**

An organization for sexual-minority Catholics meets 4 p.m. first and third Sundays of the month at St. George's Episcopal Church, 550 Ridgewood Road, Maplewood, N.J.; 973-509-0118.

### **Dignity Philadelphia:**

<http://www.dignityphila.org/>

Holds Mass 7 p.m. Sundays at 330 S. 13th St.; 215-546-2093; [dignityphila@aol.com](mailto:dignityphila@aol.com).

### **St. Mary of Grace Parish**

Inclusive church in the Catholic tradition celebrates Mass 6 p.m. Sundays in the Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County, 145 W. Rose Tree Road, Media; 610-566-1393; [www.inclusivecatholics.org](http://www.inclusivecatholics.org)

## **FRIENDS / QUAKER**

### **Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting**

Worships at 11 a.m. Sundays at 1515 Cherry St.; (215) 241-7260; [cpmm@afsc.org](mailto:cpmm@afsc.org)

## **EPISCOPAL**

### **Church of the Crucifixion**

Inclusive Episcopal community holds services 10 a.m. Sundays and 6 p.m. Fridays at 620 S. Eighth St.; 215-922-1128.

### **Church of the Holy Trinity**

Inclusive church holds services 8:30 and 11 a.m. Sundays at 1904 Walnut St.; 215-567-1267.

### **St. Paul Episcopal Church**

Welcoming and inclusive church holds services 9:30 a.m. Sundays and 7 p.m. Tuesdays at 89 Pinewood Drive, Levittown; 215-688-1796; [www.stpaullevittown.org](http://www.stpaullevittown.org).

### **Grace Epiphany Church**

A welcoming and diverse Episcopal congregation in Mt. Airy which holds a services

9:30 a.m. Sundays at 224 E. Gowen Ave., Mt. Airy; 215-248-2950. [www.grace-epi.org](http://www.grace-epi.org)

### **Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral**

Progressive and affirming congregation holds services 10 a.m. Sundays with Holy Eucharist at 3723 Chestnut St.; 215-386-0234; [www.philadelphiacathedral.org](http://www.philadelphiacathedral.org).

### **St. Asaph's Church**

Inclusive and progressive Episcopal Church holds services 9:15 a.m. Sundays, with a contemplative communion at 8 a.m. at 27 Conshohocken State Road, Bala Cynwyd; 610-664-0966; [www.saintasaphs.org](http://www.saintasaphs.org).

### **St. Luke and The Epiphany Church**

Open and welcoming church holds liturgy 9 and 11 a.m. Sundays fall through winter at 330 S. 13th St.; 215-732-1918.

### **St. Mary's Church**

Diverse and inclusive Episcopal church celebrates Eucharist 11 a.m. Sundays; adult forum is 9:30 a.m.; and evening prayer is 6:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday at 3916 Locust Walk; 215-386-3916; [www.stmarysatpenn.org](http://www.stmarysatpenn.org).

### **Trinity Memorial Episcopal Church**

Christian Formation: Adult, 9:30 a.m.; Children: 10:30; Youth: Noon Sundays. Worship with nursery care 10:30. First Sunday of each month, 7 p.m. Mosaic: jazz with poetry, prose and the wisdom of the ages; 2212 Spruce St.; 215-732-2515; [www.trinityphiladelphia.org](http://www.trinityphiladelphia.org)

### JEWISH

#### **Kol Tzedek**

Reconstructionist Synagogue committed to creating a diverse and inclusive community meets at Calvary Center, 801 S. 48th St.; 215-764-6364; [www.kol-tzedek.org](http://www.kol-tzedek.org)

[Click here for more LGBTQ-welcoming congregations](#)

### LUTHERAN

#### **Emanuel Lutheran Church**

Reconciling in Christ congregation meets 9:30 a.m. Sundays at New and Kirkpatrick streets, New Brunswick, N.J.; 732-545-2673; [www.emmanuelnb.org](http://www.emmanuelnb.org)

#### **Holy Communion Lutheran Church (ELCA)**

Reconciling in Christ congregation worships Sundays at 9 a.m. at 2111 Sansom St. and 11 a.m. at 2110 Chestnut St.; 215-567-3668; [www.lc-hc.org/drupal](http://www.lc-hc.org/drupal)

#### **Resurrection Lutheran Church**

Holds services 10 a.m. Sundays at 620 Welsh Road, Horsham; 215-646-2597.

#### **St. John's Lutheran Church (ELCA)**

Reconciling in Christ congregation holds services 10:30 a.m. Sundays at 24 N. Ridge Ave., Ambler; 215-646-2451. [www.stjohnsambler.org](http://www.stjohnsambler.org)

#### **University Lutheran Church of the Incarnation**

Services at 10:30 a.m. Sundays at 3637 Chestnut St. preceded by "Adult Forum: Sundays" at 9:30 with discussion of religious alienation and struggles of faith; 215-387-2885. [www.uniphila.org](http://www.uniphila.org)

### METHODIST

#### **Arch Street United Methodist Church**

Services at 8:30 and 11 a.m. at Broad and Arch streets; 215-568-6250.

#### **Calvary United Methodist Church**

Reconciling, welcoming and affirming church holds services 11 a.m. Sundays at 801 S. 48th St.; 215-724-1702.

#### **Chestnut Hill United Methodist Church**

Services 11 a.m. and Spirit at Play, an arts-based Sunday school for children, at 9:30 a.m. at 8812 Germantown Ave.; 215-242-9321.

#### **Penns Park United Methodist Church**

Services at 10:30 a.m. Sundays at 2394 Second Street Pike, Penn's Park; 215-598-7601. <http://pennsparkumc.com/>

### METROPOLITAN

#### **Imago Dei Metropolitan Community Church**

Sexual-minority congregation worships at 10:30 a.m. Sundays at 1223 Middletown Road (Route 352), Glen Mills; 610-358-1716; [www.ImagoDeiMCC.org](http://www.ImagoDeiMCC.org)

#### **Metropolitan Community Church**

Holds services 10:45 a.m. Sundays at the Pride Center of New Jersey. [mccctl.com](http://mccctl.com).

#### **Metropolitan Community Church of Philadelphia**

Holds services 1 p.m. Sundays at the University Lutheran Church of the Incarnation, 3637 Chestnut St.; 215-294-2020; [www.mccphiladelphia.com](http://www.mccphiladelphia.com)

### **PRESBYTERIAN**

#### **First Presbyterian Church of Lansdowne**

Services at 10 a.m. Sundays at 140 N. Lansdowne Ave.; 610-626-0800; <http://lansdownepresbyterianchurch.org/>

### **UNITARIAN**

#### **BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Church**

Holds services at 10:15 a.m. at 2040 Street Road, Warrington; 215-343-0406.

#### **First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia**

A liberal, welcoming and diverse congregation that affirms the dignity of all. Sunday services 10 a.m., 2125 Chestnut St.; 215-563-3980; [www.firstuu-philly.org](http://www.firstuu-philly.org).

#### **Mainline Unitarian Church**

Holds services 10 a.m. Sundays at 816 S. Valley Forge Road, Devon; 610-688-8332; [www.mluc.org](http://www.mluc.org).

#### **Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County**

Welcoming congregation holds services 10:30 a.m. at 145 W. Rose Tree Road, Media. Interweave, a group for LGBT parishioners and allies, meets at noon the first Sunday of the month; 610-566-4853; [www.uucdc.org](http://www.uucdc.org)

#### **Unitarian Society of Germantown**

Welcoming congregation holds services 10:30 a.m. Sundays at 6511 Lincoln Drive; 215-844-1157; <http://www.usguu.org>

#### **Unitarian Universalist Church of Cherry Hill**

Holds services 10:15 a.m.; Interweave, a group of LGBT Unitarians and their allies, also meets at 401 N. Kings Highway, Cherry Hill, N.J.; 856-667-3618. [www.uucch.org](http://www.uucch.org)

#### **Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration, Mt. Airy**

Welcoming congregation holds services 11 a.m. Sundays September-June at 6900 Stenton Ave.; 215-247-2561; [www.uurestoration.us](http://www.uurestoration.us)

#### **Unitarian Universalist Congregation, South Jersey Shore**

Holds services 10 a.m. Sundays in Galloway Township, N.J.; 609-965-9400; [www.uucsjs.org](http://www.uucsjs.org)

#### **Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Pottstown**

Holds services 10:30 a.m. at 1565 S. Keim St., Pottstown; 610-327-2662. [www.uupottstown.org](http://www.uupottstown.org)

### **UNITED**

#### **The First United Church of Germantown**

A reconciling congregation welcoming of the LGBT community holds services 11 a.m. Sundays at 6001 Germantown Ave.; lunch follows; 215-438-3077. [www.fumcog.org](http://www.fumcog.org).

#### **Living Water United Church of Christ**

An open and affirming congregation that meets for worship 11 a.m. on Sundays. 2006 Germantown Ave; 215-765-1970. [www.lwucc.org](http://www.lwucc.org).

#### **Maple Shade Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ**

Services at 10 a.m. Sundays at 45 N. Forklanding Road, Maple Shade, N.J.; 856-779-7739; [mapleshadeucc.org](http://mapleshadeucc.org)

#### **Old First Reformed Church**

Open and affirming United Church worships 10 a.m. at 151 N. Fourth St.; 215-922-4566; [www.oldfirstucc.org](http://www.oldfirstucc.org)

**Tabernacle United Church**

Services at 10 a.m. Sundays at 3700 Chestnut St.; 215-386-4100; [www.tabunited.org](http://www.tabunited.org)

**United Christian Church**

Open, affirming and welcoming congregation holds services 10:15 a.m. Sundays at 8525 New Falls Road, Levittown; 215-946-6800.

**OTHER**

**Bethlehem-Judah Ministries**

Open and affirming congregation holds services 10 a.m. Sundays at 5091 N. Dupont Hwy, Suite D, Dover, Del.; 302-730-4425.

**Evangelicals Concerned**

Lesbian and gay Christian group; 215-860-7445.

**Silverside Church**

Holds services 10 a.m. Sundays followed by a group discussion at 2800 Silverside Road, Wilmington, Del.; 302-478-5921.  
[www.silversidechurch.org](http://www.silversidechurch.org).

**Unity Fellowship Church of Philadelphia**

Diverse, affirming LGBT congregation holds services 2 p.m. Sundays at 55 N. Broad St.

## Activities Calendar

 = FREE Admission     = LGBTQ-Focused

\*See [here](#) for updates on events that have MORE DETAILS TO COME.

### Directories of activities and events:

- [MazzoniCenter.org](http://MazzoniCenter.org)
-  • <http://phillygaycalendar.com/pages/calendarlist.php>
  -  • <http://www.waygay.org/calendar>
  - <http://www.historicphiladelphia.org/>
  - <http://www.visitphilly.com/events-calendar/>
  - <http://www.oldcitydistrict.org/events>
  - <http://www.meetup.com/cities/us/pa/philadelphia/>

-  **Nov. 15 - Dec. 31**    **Franklin Square Holiday Festival**, 200 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA

  - 4:30pm-8:00pm Sundays – Thursdays; 9pm Fridays and Saturdays
  - Light show to soundtrack of Philly Pops. Two alternating shows every 30 minutes.
  - Saturdays and Sundays, Lightning Bolt Holiday Express around the square. Adults \$5, Children \$4.
  - <http://www.historicphiladelphia.org/franklin-square/holidays-in-franklin-square/>
  
-  **Nov. 20**    **Philadelphia Transgender Day of Remembrance**, William Way Community Center, 1315 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA



  - 6:00-8:00 PM
  - Join us for an evening of reflection, and remembrance
  
-  **Nov. 22**    **13<sup>th</sup> Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner**, William Way Community Center, 1315 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA



  - 1-3pm
  - Admission is bringing something to share. Please indicate a dish you can provide. Food for all types of dietary needs: Turkey, dessert, vegetarian, vegan.
  - Must RSVP: 215-732-2220.
  
-  **Nov. 23**    **The Philadelphia Thanksgiving Day Parade**, Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia

  - Parade starts at 20<sup>th</sup> Street and JFK Blvd and proceeds down Ben Franklin Parkway to Art Museum
  - From 8:30am – 12pm, Broadcast: 8:30 am- 12pm

- Nov 21** **Tree-Lighting Celebration on the East Terrace** Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130
- 5:00-8:45 PM
  - Treats, York Street Hustle, and the Philadelphia Girls Choir
  - <http://www.philamuseum.org/holidays>
-  **Nov. 22 - Dec. 24** **Christmas Village**, 1400 JFK Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19107
- Sunday – Thursday: 11am – 7pm; Friday/Saturday: 11am – 8p; Thanksgiving: 9am – 5pm; Christmas Eve: 11am – 5pm
  - Charm of an authentic German Christmas market to Center City
  - <http://www.philachristmas.com/>
-  **Nov. 23 – Dec. 31** **Macy’s Christmas Light Show**, 1300 Market St, Philadelphia, PA 19107
- Lights, Music, and Storytelling combine to make this holiday show.
  - Daily Show times: 10am, 12pm, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8pm
  - Closed Christmas Day
-  **Nov. 23 – Dec. 31** **Macy’s Dickens Christmas Village**, 1300 Market St, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107
- A walk-through exhibit based on the Dickens’ Book A Christmas Carol
  - Daily Show: 10am – 7pm
  - Closed Christmas Day
-  **Nov. 22 – Jan. 1** **Comcast Holiday Spectacular**, 1701 JFK Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19107
- 15 minute music and video show on 83’x25’ LED wall, shows at the top of the hour every hour 10:00am – 8:00 pm (except 5pm weekdays)
  - Includes audio description and closed captioning.
- Nov. 23- March 3** **Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest** 101 S. Christopher Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19147
- Contact: (215) 925-7465, [riverrink@drwc.org](mailto:riverrink@drwc.org),
  - [www.delawareriverwaterfront.com/places/blue-cross-riverrink-winterfest](http://www.delawareriverwaterfront.com/places/blue-cross-riverrink-winterfest)
  - Olympic-size ice skating rink with spectacular views of the Delaware River
  - 11/30, 6-9:00 pm, Tree Lighting
  - TBA, Skate with Santa
  - TBA, Storytime At The Lodge
  - TBA, 12 Days of Christmas Movie Nights
  - 12/31, - 6:00 pm – 1:00 am, New Year’s Eve Party On Ice
  - FREE to enter Winterfest; Skating admission: \$4; Skate rental: \$10
  - FREE skating admission for *Independence Blue Cross* Cardholders
- Nov 29- Dec 1** **Philadelphia Gay Men’s Chorus**, Prince Theater, 1412 Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19102
- “Rejoice” Concert with holiday hits, and old and new favorites
  - Nov. 29 & 30, 8pm; Dec. 1, 2pm and 8pm
  - <http://www.pgmc.org/event/rejoice/>



**Nov 30,  
Dec 7-28**

**\*Final Fridays\*** Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Ben Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130  
5:00pm-8:45pm

- Seasonally themed evenings, performances, and cocktails

<http://www.philamuseum.org/holidays>

**Dec. 15**

**TOY “The Silver Jubilee”**, The Arts Ballroom 1324 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA

- 7:30pm-10:30pm
- DVLF’s annual TOY has been named, “Best LGBT Fundraiser” by the Philadelphia Gay News. TOY is The Delaware Valley Legacy Fund’s annual holiday fundraising event that raises money to support the mission of DVLF and to provide toys for patients at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and those served by ActionAIDS. It is a cocktail party, dance, and silent auction.
- <https://www.dvlf.org/toy>

**Dec. 15**

**Action AIDS, GayBINGO! Holiday Toy Drive**

- "It's the right time to rock the night away!" Be a doll and help Santa fill his sleigh. Bring a new, unwrapped toy for a child infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Call 215-731-9255 now for tickets (\$36 for floor)
- <http://www.aidsfundphilly.org/events/gaybingo>

**Dec. 25**

**The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner** William Way Community Center, 1315 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 215-732-2220

- Dinner from 1-3 pm on Christmas Day
- Admission Price: Please bring along something to share!
- Must RSVP: 215-732-2220

**Dec. 26-  
31**

**Winter Break Family Programs** Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130

- 10:30am – 3:00pm
- Bring the kids and spread out, make art, and explore.

<http://www.philamuseum.org/holidays>

**Dec. 25**

**Being \_\_\_\_\_ at Christmas!** National Museum of American Jewish History, 101 S Independence Mall E, Philadelphia, PA 19106, 215-923-3811

- Snowy. Jewish. Happy. Caring. Buddhist. Generous. Family. Creative. Friendly. Sparkly. Fill in your own blank and join us for our annual day of family fun with music, children’s activities, and clay studio.
- Museum hours: 10:00am-5:30pm
- Free with Admission to the Museum: \$12 for Adults/Free for Members/\$5 for Children 12 and younger/Free for kids of Family Level Members and above
- TICKETS: <https://www.nmajh.org/CalendarEvent.aspx?eventid=624>



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31**

**Winter Break Family Programs** Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130

- 10:30am – 3:00pm
- Bring the kids and spread out, make art, and explore.  
<http://www.philamuseum.org/holidays>

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Seasonal Opportunities

**SERVE Philadelphia:** Search for volunteer opportunities

- One-day opportunities: Apply online <http://serve.phila.gov/>
  - Contact Tiffany Smith at (215) 851-1806 or [tiffany@globalcitizen365.org](mailto:tiffany@globalcitizen365.org)

**Reward Volunteers:** Search for volunteer opportunities

- <https://rewardvolunteers.coop/holiday-volunteer-opportunities-philadelphia/>

### Ongoing LGBTQ Opportunities



**Mazzoni Center**, 1348 Bainbridge Street Philadelphia, PA 19147

- Philadelphia's LGBTQ health and well-being center.
- Contact 215-563-0652 or visit our website for more information.
- <https://www.mazzonicenter.org/donate-now/volunteer-opportunities>



**Philadelphia FIGHT**, 1233 Locust Street, 3rd floor Philadelphia, PA 19107

- A comprehensive health services organization providing primary care, consumer education, research, and advocacy for people living with HIV/AIDS and those at high risk.
- Contact (215) 985-4448 or [fight@fight.org](mailto:fight@fight.org)
- <http://fight.org/how-to-help/volunteer/>



**GALAEI**, 149 W. Susquehanna Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19122

- GALAEI is a queer Latin@ social justice organization.
- Contact (267)457-3912 or [info@galaei.org](mailto:info@galaei.org)
- <http://www.galaei.org/>



**MANNA**, 2323 Ranstead St. Philadelphia, PA 19103

- Free home delivered meals for those with serious diseases. Volunteers needed for kitchen prep and packaging, meal delivery, assistance with events and general office work.
- Contact Glenda at 215-496-2662 x 100 or [gcooke@mannapa.org](mailto:gcooke@mannapa.org)
- <http://www.mannapa.org/volunteeratmanna/>



**Action Wellness**, 1216 Arch Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Fl. Philadelphia, PA 19107

- Action Wellness is a Philadelphia-based organization committed to helping people living with chronic diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Offer a variety of volunteer opportunities.
- Contact Jay Johnson at 215-981-3324 or [ejohnson@actionwellness.org](mailto:ejohnson@actionwellness.org)
- <https://www.actionwellness.org/volunteer/>



**William Way LGBTQ Community Center**, 1315 Spruce St., Philadelphia, PA 19107

- Contact 215-732-2220 or [info@waygay.org](mailto:info@waygay.org)
- <https://waygay40.org/volunteer/>

## Ongoing Opportunities

### **WOAR: Women Organized Against Rape**

- <http://www.woar.org/volunteer-with-woar.php>

### **Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)**

- <http://www.chop.edu/about-us/volunteer-opportunities#.VhLCUexVhBc>

### **Rebuilding Together, 4355 Orchard Street, Suite 2R, Philadelphia, PA 19124**

- The mission is to bring volunteers and communities together to improve the homes and lives of low-income homeowners.
- Contact 215-965-0777 or <http://www.rebuildingphilly.org/volunteers.htm>

### **Habitat for Humanity**

- Volunteers work on construction sites across Philadelphia. Time commitment is flexible.
- Contact (215) 765-6000 x10 or [volunteer@habitatphiladelphia.org](mailto:volunteer@habitatphiladelphia.org)
- <http://www.habitatphiladelphia.org/individual-volunteering>

## Volunteer Directories

### **Volunteer Match**

- Find a cause that lights you up. Get in touch with a nonprofit that needs you.
- Search: [VolunteerMatch.org](http://VolunteerMatch.org)

### **SERVE Philadelphia: A Cities of Service Initiative**

- Search: <http://serve.phila.gov/>

### **Coalition Against Hunger**

- Search a Food Pantry Map to find a pantry or soup kitchen near you. Be sure to call ahead of time to ensure that they need volunteers on the day you are planning to go
- Search: <http://www.hungercoalition.org/food-pantries>