



SO | Holiday Distress Relief Plan

Using the DBT exercise RAIN can help you make a plan for coping with distress during the holidays (or anytime!) Go through each prompt below and fill out the boxes to the right. Refer to the following pages for a sample and more information about RAIN.

Prompt	Your Response
R = Recognize Think about what has made holidays difficult in the past or what you're worried about this year. What emotions come up? Take a slow breath and name the feelings gently.	
A = Allow What can you say to remind yourself that all feelings are allowed and valid? Write an affirmation.	
I = Investigate With kind curiosity, think about what brings those feelings on. Did something happen in the past, do you remember something painful, are you anticipating being uncomfortable? What are the feelings trying to tell you?	
N = Nurture/Name What You're Going to Need Ask: "What am I likely to need this year that will support my recovery and align with my values.and goals. List some ideas.	
Action Plan Make a plan for meeting your needs during the holidays. List some specific actions you can take.	



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Prompt	Your Response (Sample)
R = Recognize Think about what has made holidays difficult in the past or what you're worried about this year. What emotions come up? Take a slow breath and name the feelings gently.	<i>I find the food preparation for the holidays to be very stressful and exhausting. Feelings I experience are: Anxiety, Resentment, and Exhaustion.</i>
A = Allow What can you say to remind yourself that all feelings are allowed and valid? Write an affirmation.	<i>All of my feelings matter and are valid.</i>
I = Investigate With kind curiosity, think about what brings those feelings on. Did something happen in the past, do you remember something painful, are you anticipating being uncomfortable? What are the feelings trying to tell you?	<i>» I'm worried about not doing a good job and people will be disappointed. » I don't like to ask for help because that means giving up some control, which I don't like. » I don't have the same energy as I did when I was younger and cooking tires me out. » I feel resentful because I won't be able to eat some of what's served because I no longer eat desserts or sugar.</i>
N = Nurture/Name What You're Going to Need Ask: "What am I likely to need this year that will support my recovery and align with my values and goals. List some ideas.	<i>» I need to ask for help and give myself more time to cook and rest. » I need something healthy I can eat while people are eating desserts.</i>
Action Plan Make a plan for meeting your needs during the holidays. List some specific actions you can take.	<i>» Ask my daughter to help me cook. » Take the day before Thanksgiving off from work. » Make fewer dishes—only the ones that people really love. » Get off my feet and rest at regular intervals while cooking. » Buy a nice fruit platter, even if it's expensive.</i>



RAIN: A Mindfulness Exercise for Emotional Awareness and Self-Compassion

You're feeling distressed — maybe anxious, lonely, angry, or sad. Instead of reaching for food to feel better, pause and practice **RAIN**:

R — Recognize

- Notice what you're feeling right now.
- Take a slow breath and name it gently: *"I'm feeling anxious," "I'm sad," "I'm restless."*
- Recognizing a feeling is the first step to working with it instead of avoiding it.

A — Allow

- Let the feeling be there without judgment.
- You don't have to like it or fix it — just allow it to exist.
- Remind yourself: *"It's okay to feel this way. Feelings come and go."*

I — Investigate with Kind Curiosity

- *What might be causing this feeling?*
- *Did something happen, or did I think something painful?*
- *What is this feeling trying to tell me?*
- Explore with warmth, not criticism.

N — Nurture / Name What You Need

- Ask: *"What do I really need right now?"* Is it comfort, rest, connection, or reassurance?
- Think about **how you can meet that need** in a way that supports your recovery and aligns with your values and goals.

End by taking one more mindful breath. You've just practiced caring for yourself — not with food, but with awareness and compassion.