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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**‘Tis the Season, so Take Care of Yourself  
How to Keep the ‘Happy’ in ‘Happy Holidays’**

December 7, 2009– The holidays are supposed to be a time of joy, happiness and excitement however, the holidays can also bring added stress, disappointment and loneliness. For many, this year will be more difficult given the financial and emotional stressors of the economy. When you experience this stress, remember to take care of yourself, keep things simple and reach out to friends and family. Here are some more tips to help make your holidays happy:

- Connect with others...spend time with supportive friends and family. Call or visit a friend.
- Keep things simple ...don't try to make this the "best holiday ever". Be realistic about what you can and cannot do. Pace yourself, organize your time. Pare down your to-do list, prioritize.
- Don't overspend. Many people are cutting back this year on gifts and celebrations. One of the best gifts you can give is your time and your smile...call or send a note to those you care about.
- Take time for yourself - nurture your spirit. Try to keep to your normal routine. Avoid excessive use of alcohol and caffeine. Eat healthy and nutritious meals
- Get enough sleep...it's critical for our physical, spiritual and emotional health.
- Regular exercise is the most important anti-stressor. Be active — move, stretch, take a walk, get out in the fresh air. Just 15 minutes can make a big difference.
- Breathe! , When you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed, try taking 3 deep breaths...it only takes a minute and your situation will immediately seem less intense or worrisome.
- Find a serene place of your own — even if it's just a comfortable chair in a corner. Try meditation or yoga to help you relax.
- Keep your sense of humor...laugh...sometimes it's the best medicine during trying times.

If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed this holiday season, remember that Jefferson Center is here to help. We provide a continuum of programs and services for our community, including Jefferson Center Partners, a low cost counseling program to support families impacted by this difficult time.

**About Jefferson Center for Mental Health**

Celebrating its 50th year, Jefferson Center for Mental Health is the community nonprofit mental health center serving Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties. Jefferson Center helps to bring hope for a brighter future for thousands of community members who struggle with mental health challenges. The Center serves the people throughout its three-county area with 300 staff in 20 locations. Its staff has expertise in numerous areas, including children and family issues, adults with serious mental illness, suicide prevention, early intervention, juvenile justice, and trauma treatment. Jefferson Center offers a full continuum of specialized behavioral health services for every age, including Wellness services and community classes. Last year the Center served over 7,000 individuals facing some of life's toughest challenges and reached 6,000 more with education and prevention services. For more information, visit [www.jcmh.org](http://www.jcmh.org)

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