The SistahSpeak! Youth Project™ is a sexual and reproductive health program for young Black women, femmes, and girls. SYP! recognizes and affirms the need for young Black Women, femmes, and girls to discuss the things that matter to them, get support, and develop critical thinking and real-world skills in a safe, inclusive space. For more information about SYP! and our summer session visit newvoicesrj.org/syp.

It’s important to recognize that holiday time with family can bring up a whole bunch of memories and emotions. All of the sights, sounds, and smells of the season are comforting for some and disturbing for others. But for most people, they’re a combination of both. One thing very important to remember is, while this is the season of giving you deserve to give to yourself! This requires you to be patient and generous with yourself, noticing your triggers, and setting the boundaries you need to stay healthy.

This toolkit will include:

1. Tips on identifying your triggers
2. Powerful holiday affirmations
3. Surviving the holiday season supply list
Tips on Identifying Triggers

For most people, identifying triggers takes a lot of time and introspection. However, there are certain steps that you can take to get you on through this holiday season.

- Make a plan Before you go anywhere this holiday season consider what is likely to be triggering for you and what you’ll do when you encounter these triggers.

- Set Boundaries You are entitled to set your own boundaries and decide your own limits. It can be a painful thing to say no to family or friends regarding holiday events, however you have every right to prioritize your mental health.

- Practice self care It is important over the holidays that you make sure you're getting enough sleep, eating nourishing foods, and taking time for yourself.

Surviving the Holidays Supply List

- Noise Blockers (Headphones, Earplugs)

- Sensory Items:
  - Touch (Play doh, Pipe Cleaners, Pop Fidgets)
  - Taste (Hot Beverages: tea, Hot Chocolate)
  - Smell (Lavender, Scented Candles)

- Activity Books ( Journals, coloring books, activity pages)

- Music (Playlist that calms you, uplifting music)
“My happiness is one of the greatest gifts I can give.”
This is a great affirmation for anyone struggling with being unable to purchase gifts this holiday season. The best gifts don’t cost a penny!

“I am worthy of love and acceptance.”
This affirmation for holiday anxiety reminds you that you are worthy of love and acceptance, but that you won’t accept anything less than what you deserve.

“I will find joy in where I am.”
Perhaps you aren’t excited about the places or events you have to attend this holiday season. This affirmation for holiday anxiety will remind you that you can and you will find joy wherever you are.

“I am enough.”
Whatever it is that your anxiety is convincing you off, remember that you are enough. If your anxiety is telling you that your gifts aren’t good enough or that you didn’t spend enough money or that you didn’t spend enough time with family and friends, remember, you are enough.

“I deserve to give myself ‘me’ time.”
You sure do. Give yourself permission to take a step away from the craziness of the season. You do not have to spend every waking moment doing something or surrounding yourself with other people.

“I will treat myself with kindness, patience and understanding.”
This is one of the most important affirmations for holiday anxiety – treat yourself well. Do not let your negative thoughts invade your entire being.