

Yellow Ribbon Fund Military Families Keep the Holidays Joyful Through Times Of Change

*National Military Family Charity
Recipients Offer Advice to All Families This
Holiday Season*



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/EINPresswire.com/ -- For military caregivers, families and wounded

veterans, the holidays can be stressful. This holiday season, [Yellow Ribbon Fund](#) recipients are offering practical advice on how to keep the holidays joyful in the wake of major changes in any family.

A 2021 report found that 40% of post-9/11 service members had some form of a service-connected disability, with 20% having a disability rating of 60 or higher. This disability rating describes the level of disability and impact on the service member's ability to perform their job or daily activities as determined by the Veterans Administration (VA). Over 1.1 million post-9/11 military caregivers have faced holidays under extreme stress and have learned how to make the most of an extremely different holiday season.

"Military families face daily challenges when navigating an injury, wound or illness, but this is especially true around the holidays," says Gina Harrow, executive director at Yellow Ribbon Fund. "It can be difficult to find joy when the stress of everyday life can be overwhelming. We hope this advice can help other families find joy and ease the stress of the holiday season."

With over 1,600 military caregiver families as current recipients of Yellow Ribbon Fund, many had useful tips to share about navigating holiday stress after a life-altering wound or injury:

Start New Traditions:

Emily M. from Florida says, "Don't be afraid to start new traditions and value experiences wherever you are in your journey."

"We try to make new traditions and keep things simple," says Kayla T. with the National Virtual chapter.

Volunteer:

Heather L. with the Florida Chapter says, "finding a way to volunteer in your area keeps the Christmas spirit alive."

Ashely S. from the National Virtual Chapter says that her family tries to remember the reason for the season and help others, "it's tough to be stressed or frustrated when you're doing acts of kindness."

Reduce Stress and Manage Expectations:

Florida chapter member Caira B. says, "Sometimes holidays are loaded with pain, guilt, worry, etc. Don't have huge expectations that everyone HAS to join in. Have it available; if they join, they join. If not, don't be upset. And don't forget to ask the most reluctant person what they're most looking forward to (or what they'd like) so that it's available."

Dee B. from Texas says, "allow yourself grace and know everything doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful."

Plan, Schedule and Find Consistency:

"I never allow the situation to get the best of me. As soon as December 1 hits, those lights go up. Those stockings get hung. The tree is set up. I find that the consistency in the countdown to the day helps me maintain a joyful spirit," says Jeri S. from Florida.

Caroline W. from Texas says her family likes to schedule experiences with their children, "bringing them joy is contagious. The kids decorate the tree (ornaments unmatched and placed haphazardly). We bake and make ornaments for others. I let them decorate the house with hand-cut snowflakes and daisy chains from construction paper. We drive around and look at Christmas lights."

Keep It Simple:

Kenna H. from the National Virtual Chapter says, "holidays can be tough or depressing for many people. I think finding the little wins. If your holiday looks different this year, understand that it's okay. Setting boundaries or saying we can't do that this year is also okay."

"Keeping it simple makes for less stress. Make the memories you'd like priorities and let the rest go." Amanda M., National Virtual Chapter

No matter what holiday traditions or stress you face this time of year, there are always opportunities to find joy. Yellow Ribbon Fund military families are a great example of making the most out of what you have.

Yellow Ribbon Fund is a national military family charity that supports and assists post-9/11 wounded, ill and injured service members, families and military caregivers. To learn more about how Yellow Ribbon Fund helps military families across the country, visit yellowribbonfund.org.

Help provide resources and programs for Yellow Ribbon Fund recipients by making a tax-deductible donation at yellowribbonfund.org/donate.

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About Yellow Ribbon Fund:

Yellow Ribbon Fund is a national nonprofit veteran service organization dedicated to serving severely ill and injured post-9/11 wounded service members and their families from every branch of the United States military following unexpected medical crises. With the help of donors, Yellow Ribbon Fund's Crossroads and Keystone programs enable them to have a significant impact on helping service members and their families navigate their life-long recovery journey. The Crossroads Program provides families with hotel stays for acute stays at Walter Reed National Medical Center. Fully furnished apartments local to the hospital for long-term stays and car rentals for families to have full access to transportation without restriction. The Keystone Program steps in and takes care of the family unit that experiences the long-term effects of injury and recovery. The Yellow Ribbon Fund's top priority is to keep families together during the recovery process. They accomplish this by providing housing and transportation along with caregiver support when and where it's needed. For more information on the Yellow Ribbon Fund, go to YellowRibbonFund.org or call 240-223-1180 or email at email@YellowRibbonFund.org.

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