



Handling Holiday Stress

Too often, the holidays are a source of stress rather than what they're meant to be: a chance to share the festive season with family and friends. Here are some tips for coping with stress and getting more cheer out of your holidays.

- › **Don't be perfect; be you.** Set realistic expectations for yourself. Keep your plans and activities simple.
- › **Pace yourself.** Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and the New Year can all be busy times. Remember, the season lasts for weeks. Get organized, and break your preparations into small steps.
- › **Budget wisely.** It is easy to buy on credit and ignore the bills until after the holidays. Set your limit ahead of time.
- › **Get into the spirit.** Deck the halls. Build a snowman. Too often adults miss out on the simple pleasures of celebrating the holidays.
- › **Take time out for yourself.** Unwind and pamper yourself with a break from the action. Try relaxation techniques, meditation or deep-breathing exercises.
- › **Embrace family.** Look forward to reuniting with relatives this holiday. Cherish the time you spend with your loved ones, and make an effort to be as relaxed, positive and cheerful as you can.
- › **Celebrate safely.** Give your body a gift this year by treating it with respect. Don't overindulge in sweets and goodies. Know your limits when it comes to alcohol.
- › **Make New Year's resolutions.** Setting goals challenges us to aim for higher fulfillment and self-improvement.

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