

## Wellness Tips To Reduce Holiday Stress

The holiday season is here once again, are you ready? Do you want to make this year different – perhaps less stressful or more peaceful? Simple, yes. Easy, not always. Consider picking some ideas from the following list that make sense to you and commit to making this year's holiday season one with less stress and worry and more peace and joy! Forward this email to friends and loved ones and print a copy to post in a place you'll see frequently to remind you!

### Physical & Nutritional Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress

1. Drink lots of water.
2. Get enough sleep.
3. Move your body!
4. Stop eating before you're full, "use a smaller plate and wait" (20 minutes to see if you're still hungry)!
5. Take your supplements & vitamins.
6. Reduce your caffeine intake, reduce your sugar intake!
7. Get a massage, manicure, pedicure or facial – what makes YOU feel good?
8. Take a hot bubble bath or a long shower or sit by the fireplace!

### Emotional Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress

1. Stop to take a deep breath.
2. Have realistic expectations of yourself and those around you.
3. Practice gratitude, often.
4. Laugh! Laugh again! Keep laughing!
5. Stay in touch with your true emotions.
6. Cry, scream, or punch the pillow when you need to – really, it's allowed!
7. Be alone for a few minutes or hours to reflect and listen to your own needs.
8. Let yourself grieve loss and sadness – accept what is.

### Social Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress

1. Talk to your friends about your frustrations, concerns and joys.
2. Prioritize invitations – say no when you need to take care of yourself or set limits you can accept and make a brief appearance.
3. Make an agreement with yourself to not compare your appearance, lifestyle or possessions to other people.
4. Keep old traditions alive and be open to new ones.

### Mental Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress

1. Volunteer – at a food bank, special holiday dinner or animal shelter.
2. Take downtime to snooze, read, and relax.
3. Play your favorite card and board games with family and friends.
4. Take a crossword puzzle or Sudoku break.
5. Pick your battles, choose your priorities – ask "How important is?"
6. Let go of the little stuff to reduce stress and keep the focus on what's important.
7. Watch your favorite TV shows or movies.
8. Share your baking/cooking with homebound people or lonely neighbors.

### Creative Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress

1. Paint, draw, sew or sculpt your thoughts and feelings.
2. Visit a museum or art gallery or thrift shop or craft fair.
3. Go to a movie by yourself or ask someone to enjoy it with you.
4. Listen to music that relaxes and/or energizes you.
5. Go for a drive to your favorite place; maybe even make it a picnic.

6. Write in your journal, if you don't have one, a simple notebook will work.

### **Spiritual Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress**

1. Meditate or pray often.
2. Read the Bible, Torah, or other book that's meaningful to you.
3. Seek the deep meaning behind church or mass services.
4. Remember that your God, Creator, Universe, Spirit or Higher Power is working behind the scenes.
5. Adjust your perspective to include peace, compassion, and forgiveness.

### **Practical Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress**

1. Use lists and calendars to stay organized
2. Set attainable decorating goals based on what time you have available.
3. Delegate chores: cooking, childcare, caring for guests, etc.
4. Cook the turkey or ham; let guests bring the rest.
5. Be flexible with timing, food, and schedules, let the process flow.
6. Rent funny DVDs and videos to keep people occupied if you need more time.
7. Shop over the Internet or during times when it's quiet to avoid crowds.
8. Look ahead and make a list of what you'll need and then buy it early.
9. Allow yourself extra time.
10. Stick to your financial budget.
11. Avoid impulse buys, use cash instead of a credit card.

### **Relational Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress**

1. Change your regular responses to aggravating family members – recognize what your “default response” is in advance of family gatherings.
2. Shrug off insults, challenges, and criticisms – it's probably NOT about you!
3. Avoid past betrayals, mistakes, failures – both yours and others'.
4. Don't expect people to change (unless you change first).
5. Enlist your children's help in baking cookies and cleaning up.
6. Stick with your kids' routine to the extent possible.
7. Enforce the regular rules for sharing, indoor voices, etc.
8. Maintain healthy boundaries and ask for what you need.

Remember, we're here to support you – regular adjustments, supplements, footbaths, wellness services – all will help you stay well, boost your immune system and give energy to enjoy the holiday season!

A portion of these tips were provided in part by Laurie Pawlik-Kienlen, from British Columbia, Canada who writes about health and psychology.

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