

Top Ten Tips for Dealing With Holiday Stress...

Start sooner rather than later. Set aside a little time every day to prepare for the holidays. Spacing out errands will help ease the pressure and reduce the likelihood of last-minute panic situations.

Just say “no.” During the holidays, work, personal and family obligations can wreak havoc on your daily routine, cut into your free time and leave you feeling overwhelmed. Be selective and say “yes” only to invitations you really want to attend.

Make me time. It may seem to go against holiday instincts, but scheduling time out for yourself is one of the best gifts you can give to everyone. Remember: burning the candle at both ends will not only leave you exhausted, it'll probably make you feel pretty down towards the season.

Ask and you will receive. Recruit the support of other family members. Just because they're not volunteering, doesn't mean they don't want to help. Children especially enjoy being part of the action.

Stick to your budget. It's not hard to get caught up in the flurry of holiday spending, but once the sparkle of the holidays is over, you could be left with a very real bill. Draw up a realistic budget for the season and honour it.

Stay healthy. It's easy to let healthy eating and exercise fall to the wayside during this indulgent time. Make an effort to get enough sleep, limit consumption of alcohol and fatty foods and squeeze in physical activity whenever possible. Being well rested and healthy will help you cope better with stress.

Enjoy the ride. Concentrating on 'the big day' can take away from the fun of getting there. Take pleasure in the here and now of planning, preparation and time spent with family and friends on the way to the holiday.

Help others. Giving time, affection and care to others, especially those in need is the most rewarding experience of all. Some of us may know of at least one elderly person who would value a special friendly visit.

Remain positive. All too often, we tend to focus on the negative aspects of the holidays—the commercialism, the holiday crush at shopping malls and the unending chores. Regardless of your religious background, you can enjoy the music, the lights and the decorations in the store windows.

*Feeling stressed? Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help.
Call your EAP at **1 800 387-4765**.*