

13 Tips for a *Stress-Free* Holiday Season

Not only can the Holiday season bring on stress, but for some people, it can bring on the blues. Holiday depression is common and should pass as the stress and strain of the holiday season ends. However, experts advise getting help from a mental health professional if it does not end with the Holiday season. If you would like some support during this potentially stressful and hectic time, call your Employee Assistance Program with Mines & Associates, at 1-800-873-7138.

- 1. *Be more realistic about holiday expectations*** - both yours and the ones others may have of you. Whose expectations are you trying to meet and why?
- 2. *Give yourself and others a break.*** Don't be overly critical if things don't go as planned.
- 3. *Don't expect the holidays to solve your personal or family problems.*** It might be a magical time of year, but it won't automatically make problems go away.
- 4. *Manage your time wisely.*** Let others know what you can and cannot do. Don't say "Yes" when it's better for you to say "No".
- 5. *Create a master to-do list.*** In other words, write down everything that needs to be bought, made, baked, sent, etc. Now pare down this list. What can you cut out or scale down?
- 6. *Be reasonable about what you can accomplish*** and limit holiday baking, decorating, and gift giving, as necessary.
- 7. *Maintain your health.*** Watch what you eat and drink, get enough sleep, and make time for your exercise program.
- 8. *Money worries can also add to the stress of the holiday season.*** Shop within your budget and plan in advance when, how, and where you will shop.
- 9. *Delegate tasks to other family members.*** Involve your spouse and children in holiday tasks and preparations.
- 10. *Carefully choose the events you will attend*** so that they will bring the most to your celebration of the holidays. Focus on what the true meaning of the holiday is - for you.
- 11. *Celebrate each event along the way and not just "the day".*** For example, take joy in decorating the house, baking cookies, gift-wrapping, etc.
- 12. *Make time for yourself to replenish your energy.*** Have a long soak in the tub or indulge in a cup of your favorite hot drink.
- 13. *Acknowledge your feelings of grief and loss*** and allow yourself to express these normal feelings if you are separated from family and friends, or have suffered the loss of a loved one.