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Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Bust Holiday Stress

By Norma Schmidt, Coach, LLC

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The holidays will be here before you know it. Clear the way for greater joy, love and meaning this year by busting these sources of holiday stress:

1. Too much to do in too little time.

*This week, set holiday priorities with your family. Discuss what traditions to keep, which to discard, and which new traditions to try.

*Make a holiday to-do list NOW and create a realistic schedule for when to accomplish each item.

*Avoid overscheduling.

*Ask family members for help with holiday tasks.

2. Long lines in stores.

*Shop via catalog or Internet, and avoid stores on weekends if you can.

*If you're shopping with small children, take along snacks, books, toys or other items to make waiting in line more pleasant. Or, if you're sufficiently uninhibited, sing a holiday song with your child.

*If you're shopping alone, use waiting time to relax and center yourself with meditation or prayer. Try directing your attention to your breathing at your belly. Or practice observing the people around you through the eyes of compassion, without judging. Give thanks or pray for healing, peace, or other concerns close to your heart.

3. Difficult relatives.

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*Take some quiet time to develop a plan for taking care of yourself around relatives who "get your goat."

*Invest in yourself by using a therapist to help create a plan to protect your boundaries.

4. Cranky kids.

*Think "low key" for a happy celebration with little ones. Remember that your small child thrives on your undivided attention and has a limited capacity to adjust to adult "needs" to hurry.

*Protect your child's naptime and playtime.

*Spend floor-time with your child every day.

5. Commercialism.

*Create family traditions that involve giving to those in need.

*Focus on low-cost or no-cost holiday traditions.

*Help keep children's expectations realistic. For example, you might say You'll get about the same amount of presents as you did on your birthday.

6. Bills!

*Decide on a holiday budget for entertaining and gifts.

* If credit cards make overspending too easy, stick to cash for holiday purchases.

7. Loss.

* If you have lost a loved one, the holidays may intensify your grief. Explore ways to cope at www.griefnet.org/library/articles/hfa-tips.html or www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?id=FL00055.

*If holiday blues persist or seem particularly intense, don't hesitate to reach out for professional help. Your physician or clergyperson can give you a referral.

8. Post-holiday let-down.

*Spread out the fun at least through the end of school vacation by planning an outing or a fun time at home for each day.

*Have a party and finish your leftover holiday sweets the night before school resumes.

A little forethought and planning can go a long way towards making you glad the holidays are coming –

instead of just glad when they're over. Your wisdom holds the key to holiday joy.

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Norma Schmidt, Coach, LLC, edits "The Balance Point," a free–biweekly e–zine for women who are both professionals and parents. She offers individual and group coaching and teleclasses.

Plan To Manage Holiday Stress

By ADD Coach Jennifer Koretsky

Everyone finds themselves stressed out during the holiday season. But for adults with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), November through January can feel like a whirlwind of tasks and responsibilities. Lack of time management will result in undue pressure and overwhelm for the ADD adult.

One way to take the stress out of the holidays is to plan for them. These simple steps can help the ADD adult manage their time and tasks during the holiday season, thereby relieving unnecessary stress.

Create one hour this week to plan your holiday preparation schedule, and follow these steps:

Step 1 – Make a List of all the Things You Need to Do to Prepare for the Holiday

This probably includes gift shopping, writing and mailing holiday cards, decorating your home, planning your travel, etc. After you have made this list, put a star next to each of the items that you don't like to do. (Maybe you get bored writing out the holiday cards, or maybe you detest shopping.)

Step 2 – Use a Calendar or Planner

Use something that gives you ample space to write for each day. This could be a wall calendar, a daily planner, or planning software. Begin by writing in all your holiday appointments, such as parties and scheduled shopping trips. Next, write in all the other activities that you have going on during the month, like meetings and appointments. When you're done, you should have a good idea of where your free time is.

Now, take a look at the items on your holiday to–do list that are not marked with a star, and schedule them in. Do you have a free evening next week in which you can write out your cards? Schedule it on your calendar! Do you have a free Saturday to get your shopping done? Schedule it on your calendar!

Step 3 – Make the Dreaded Tasks Easier

Take a look at all those tasks you marked with a star. These are the tasks that you hate to do for one reason or another. Take a moment to look at each one, and figure out how to make that task a little easier or more bearable. If you hate writing cards because it's a tedious and boring task, you can make it easier on yourself by inviting a friend over to chat, catch up, and write out cards with you. Hate

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decorating? Perhaps you can buy a new CD you've been wanting and allow yourself to crank it up while you put up the holiday decorations.

Investing just a small amount of time in planning can save you from undue stress and overwhelm during this holiday season.

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Jennifer Koretsky is an ADD Management Coach who helps adults learn how to manage their ADD and move forward in life. She offers individual and group coaching, workshops, and skill-building programs. Her work has been featured in various media, including The New York Times Magazine. Subscribe to Jennifer's free email newsletter, The ADD Management Guide, by visiting

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