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How to Overcome the Overwhelm of the Holiday Season (And Reduce Holiday Stress)

By Donna P. Lendzyk

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The Holiday Season can be a wonderful time of year, filled with lovely decorations, gift exchanges, visits with friends and family and delicious meals. But for many of us, the Holiday Season can also be quite overwhelming with all the added activities such as decorating our homes, selecting, buying, wrapping and exchanging gifts and hosting friends and family while we prepare multi-course elaborate meals! The question is, "What can we do to Overcome Overwhelm during the Holidays?"

1. Simplify Your Life

Holidays that are full of complexity are neither fun nor comfortable. Complexity can easily contribute to feeling overwhelmed. We can be invited to numerous events and want to host others ourselves. These activities can be very wonderful experiences, but there can also be too many to prepare for and attend in a short time. You may also have to consider selecting, wrapping and delivering gifts, decorating the house, and, potentially, traveling to visit friends and family across the country. Keeping the holidays simple with a manageable number of events to attend and/or host, can greatly contribute to Overcoming Overwhelm during the Holidays.

2. Practice Extreme Self-Care

In our fast paced world, often our physical bodies become the last priority. We drag our bodies around nonstop and we can be indifferent to signs of exhaustion. When we practice extreme self-care, our mind, body and spirit are much more likely to assist us in our other efforts by providing strong support including energy, enthusiasm and presence. With extreme self-care our energy is up, our confidence is high and we feel much more positive. Some examples of self-care activities include sufficient sleep, quiet time, exercise, healthy food, and joyful recreation. Often during the holidays, some of our self-care activities are put on hold with all the hustle and bustle of the season. Taking proper care of ourselves during the Holiday Season can contribute greatly to Overcoming Overwhelm during the Holidays.

3. Celebrate the Unique You

Sometimes there are "should" or "must" dos on our to-do list that we really don't enjoy doing or don't leverage our best skills. We can end up delaying or not completing these activities. Or if we take these items on, they can contribute to frustration or overwhelm. Instead, we can consider whether there is someone else who can take care of the item for us or determine if the activity really needs to be done now.

There are many events and activities that we can participate in during the holidays on top of regular life activities. If we don't know what we really want during the Holiday Season, then it will be much harder to say no to invitations that do not align with our desires. A great place to start is to clearly define our preferences in writing. By sharing our vision of the ideal Holiday Season with our life partner, asking him or her what their desired Holiday Season looks like and integrating these two collaboratively, you

have a plan the two of you can action and support together for the Holiday Season. Celebrating the Unique You, by respecting and celebrating your desired Holiday Season, can greatly contribute to Overcoming Overwhelm and experiencing more power, serenity and joy during the Holiday Season.

Donna P. Lendzyk is a professional coach and businesswoman who guides women to Overcome Overwhelm and Achieve their Desired Results. She is the author of new multi-media "Overcome Overwhelm eProgram." Do you need any FREE strategies on Overcoming Overwhelm & Achieving Your Desired Results? Sign-up and receive "Overcome Overwhelm Secrets". This free, informative, multi-media enewsletter is available from:

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

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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 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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