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Tips For Less Holiday Stress

By Deborah Martin

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by: **Deborah Martin**

Holiday Stress? Some Tips For Having Less

We all dream of having wonderful holidays. We start each day full of the spirit of the season. We look at the lovely fresh fallen snow, and marvel at the beauty of the world. But lets face it – life can be stressful. By the time we get the kids up, dressed, and fed, referee a few morning scuffles, find lost homework, binkies, and keys, field a few phone calls, dig out the car, make our way through morning traffic, and try to get some Christmas shopping done at the local Target, the good feeling is... well, gone. The joy and magic of the season can easily be overshadowed by obligations, responsibilities, credit card spending gone mad, and, of course, relatives. If any of this is sounding familiar, you might be asking yourself – How could we end the madness? Well, here are some tips to make the season a little jollier – or at least less cranky.

“ Adjust your outlook: Your perspective is the looking glass through which you see the world. It is central to how you experience emotions, situations, and life in general. By shifting your perspective you can, in effect, change you experience. This is your life – put a positive spin on things – what have you got to loose but the blues!

“ Simplify your life: Get organized, try to cut down on clutter, and prioritize your tasks. Many dreaded obligations are self-imposed. Remember you really don't have to do everything.

“ Practice extreme self care: Make time to do what you love – take in a movie, go to a museum, curl up with a book or take a long hot bubble bath. Pamper yourself! This is your life – enjoy it! Don't worry – the dishes aren't going to pack up and leave town. Get plenty of sleep – exhaustion is a main factor in stress – and don't over indulge. Enjoy all the holiday goodies, but do so in moderation. Add some moderate exercise and you'll be healthier and have more energy.

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“ Be thankful for the little things: Practice loving the simple things in life; playing games with your children, taking a walk on a snowy winter morning, or cuddling with your honey after everyone's in bed. When we open our hearts to happiness, we often find that it's all around us.

“ Make peace with flexibility: Celebrate your successes and let the rest slide. Learn to go with the flow. Take a breath, relax. Don't sweat the small stuff.

“ Embrace the spirit of the holidays: Greet each day with the holiday spirit and fill your life with kindness, compassion, gratefulness and love.

Yes, there will still be hectic moments and stressful events, but you control the extent to which you respond to them. Open yourself to the possibility that the holidays can be joyous, and you might just find yourself whistling along with some of those Christmas carols.

Deborah Martin is a mother, writer, life coach, and co-founder of The Woman Project. She lives in the

Chicago suburbs with her partner & son.

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Holiday Decorating Ideas And The Environment

By Jeanette Joy Fisher

Have you thought about how your holiday decorating affects the environment? What can you do about your holiday decorating to improve your happiness and at the same time be kind to the environment?

The good news, taking action to decorate your home and office for the holidays, while keeping respect for the environment, makes your workload easier.

Conquer holiday stress with simplicity. Keep your decorations to a minimum. Simple holiday decorating makes your life easier to manage.

Simple decorating doesn't mean no impact. You can use Environmental Psychology strategies to achieve a stunning display with less work. At the same time, you can save money on new holiday decorations.

Eight Environmental Psychology Holiday Decorating Tips

1. Too many small items in a small space tire the eye and overload the brain. Don't go over the top with holiday decorations. Don't spend your money foolishly on a lot of cluttering ornamentation.
2. Choose a few large holiday decorations to make a bold statement. Bright and deep colors take up

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more visual space.

3. Make a gorgeous framed note on parchment that says: "We love the earth and choose to celebrate with nature."
4. Work with the holiday decorations you already have. Renew tired ornaments with non-toxic craft paint.
5. Decorate with consumable food, like nuts, fresh fruit, and cookies.
6. Decorate with Mother Nature. Cuttings of evergreens bring respite to tired eyes and fresh aroma to enclosed stale air.
7. Increase your office productivity and business prosperity. When people feel happy, they accomplish more. Take a tip from music therapy expert Enicia Fisher: Play easily-recognized soft music without voices. This encourages signing or humming to oneself to fill in the lyrics.
8. Instead of hanging lights all over your home, concentrate on the front entry to attract the eye and make all feel welcome.

Defeat holiday stress this year. Use holiday decorating ideas that protect the environment and yourself.

Happy Holidays!

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