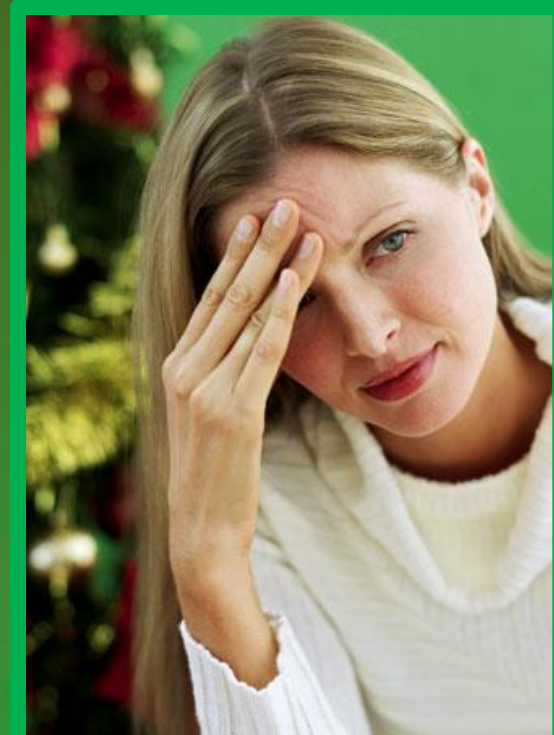


~~The 12 Days of Christmas~~

12 Ways to
Cope with
the
Holidays



**Stress and
depression can
occur at any
time in our
lives.**



But, for many people, these feelings occur during the winter months and around the holidays.



For most people the holiday season is a time for family, friends, celebrations, and fond memories of holidays past.



Unfortunately,
for many, the
holidays are a
difficult time
of the year.
The holidays
may trigger
feelings of.....



Loneliness



Sadness



Stress



Anxiety



...and
unpleasant
past
holiday
memories.



You may feel overwhelmed when trying to balance the demands of shopping, parties, family obligations, and house guests.



On TV and in movies,
the holidays are
usually trouble-free
and peaceful. But,
family problems don't
go away when
December arrives.
The reality is that real
people and families
are not perfect.



Reasons for the “holiday blues”...

Stress

Fatigue

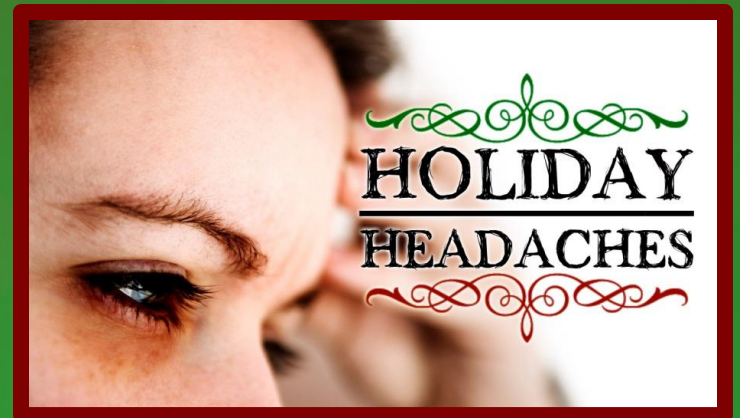
Unrealistic
Expectations

Over
Commercialization

Financial Stress

Inability to be with
one's family and
friends

With the increased demands and pressures of the season, it's common to have physical effects.



Some
physical
effects
that can
happen
with
holiday
stress
include...

Tension
Headaches

Backaches

Stomachaches

Anxiousness

Increased
heart rate

Muscle
tension

Along with
feeling tired and
stressed,
behavior
changes can
happen during
these stressful
times.



Some possible behavior changes from holiday stress include...

Forgetfulness
or Confusion

Can't pay
attention to
details

Change in
sleep patterns

Change in
eating
patterns

Change in
exercise
patterns

Negative
mood or
attitude

Excessive
drinking

Constant
feeling of
urgency

Difficulty
expressing
ideas

Decreased
satisfaction
with tasks

Don't let
negative feelings
and unwanted
physical problems
and behaviors
happen during
this holiday
season.



Follow some simple, practical tips to change your “holiday blues and blahs” to “holiday oohs and ahhs.”



12 Ways to Cope with the Holidays



#1

Set Realistic
goals for
yourself.



- & The holidays don't have to be perfect, or just like last year.
- & As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well.
- & Choose a few traditions to hold onto, and be open to creating new ones.



#2

Make a list
and prioritize
the important
activities.



My Christmas List

- & Make a “to-do list” for the day.
Write the list on one page so it can be carried with you.
- & Prioritize the most important tasks.
- & Schedule the more demanding tasks during the times when you are the most alert and energetic.



& Schedule an easy job after a difficult one or a long task after a short one. That can help you stay motivated.

& Make time for breaks and to be with with family and friends.



#3

Make time
for
yourself!



& Take a breather... Spend just 30 minutes alone. Being without distractions may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do.

& Take a walk...listen to soothing music.

& Reduce stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.



#4

Ask For
Support



- & Accept help from loved ones and friends.
- & Use this time to reconnect with friends and family.
- & Sharing the “load” of the season can actually bring families together.



#5

Stick to a
budget.



- & Keep track of your holiday spending.
- & Overspending can lead to depression when the bills arrive after the holidays are over.
- & Extra bills with little budget to pay them can lead to further stress and depression.



#6

Don't
abandon
healthy
habits.



- & Don't let the holidays become an excuse to eat and drink to excess.
- & Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt.....(and waistline)
- & Continue to get plenty of sleep and physical activity.



#7

Remember
the true
meaning of
the holidays



Peace on
Earth.....

Silent Night,
Holy Night....

Making Time
for Others

Let it
Snow.....

Santa Claus is
Coming to
Town

Love.....

Giving is
Better than
receiving

Sharing

Goodwill
toward Man

There's No
Place Like
Home...

Spread the
good cheer.....



#8

Learn to
say no.



- & People will understand if you can't attend an event or take on an additional activity.
- & If you say yes only to the things you want to do, you won't feel as bitter or overwhelmed.



#9

Reach
out.





- & If you feel lonely, seek out community events, including religious events or other social events.
- & They can offer support and companionship.
- & Volunteering your time to help others. It's also a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.

#10

Set aside
differences.



- & Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all your expectations.
- & Set aside criticisms until later.
- & Be understanding if others get upset when something goes wrong...they are stressed, too.



Try something
new.....

Try something
free.....

Try something
simple.....



#11

- & Seek out activities that are “free.”
- & Take a drive to look at holiday decorations.
- & Go window shopping.
- & Make a snowman or snow angel.
- & Go sledding.



#12

Live “in the
moment” and
enjoy the
present.



- & Leave “yesterday” in the past and look toward the future.
- & Life brings changes.
- & Each season is different and can be enjoyed in its own way.
- & Don't set yourself up for disappointment by comparing today with the “good old days.”



TAKE CONTROL OF THE HOLIDAYS

- & Don't let the holidays become something you dread.
- & Take steps to prevent the stress and depression that can happen during the holidays.



Seek Professional Help if you need it

& If you still find yourself feeling sad, anxious, unable to sleep, irritable or unable to face routine chores, talk to your doctor or mental health professional.



With a little planning and some positive thinking, you may find that you enjoy the holidays this year more than you thought you would.



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