

Holiday Stress

Signs of Holiday Stress:

- Irritability & Fatigue
- Sleep Problems
- Over-eating
- Loss of Enthusiasm
- Feelings of Detachment from Others

No matter how it is celebrated, the holiday season is a busy time for everyone. Balancing an average work-life routine with the added demands for the holidays can be stressful. Maximize enjoyment of the holiday season by following these tips for reducing the impact of holiday stress.

Take Back Control:

-Learn to Say "No"

Many people field a greater volume of volunteer, social and family requests this time of year. Saying "no" to a good cause can be difficult and involves setting boundaries. Basic tips include being clear, concise and not making excuses.

-Plan for the Holiday

Establishing a schedule of events is the first step to planning for the holiday. Sort through social and financial demands of the holiday; then, prioritize and schedule. If it isn't important, don't do it. Be clear with family and friends about what annual commitments can and cannot be included this year. When scheduling, be sure to be realistic and schedule in downtime as well.

-Cut Out the Clutter

As the economy is shifting, so are personal budgets. Downsizing lists of holiday cards to send and gifts to purchase is one way to de-clutter the holiday. Start with a budget and stick to it. Consider a holiday email instead of a holiday card. Exchange homemade gifts and cookies instead of store bought gifts. By keeping a realistic budget and making accommodations, one can avoid the holiday financial hangover.

-Make Time for You

This year, schedule downtime for yourself and for your family. Family downtime could include a game night, family dinner and movie rental. Including relaxing activities is the key to holiday stress management. Deep breathing, exercise, meditation and getting plenty of sleep all aid in resiliency.

Web Resources

- American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org/topics/topicstress.html>
- Workplace Solutions Self-Assessment: http://wseap.com/site_emp_solutions/self_assess_tools.php
- The Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stress/MH00030>

If you feel overwhelmed or emotional during this season, don't forget that your EAP can help. An EAP counselor can discuss coping strategies during this holiday season and beyond. You are not alone; Workplace Solutions staff is waiting for your call.

Contact Workplace Solutions today for free, confidential assistance.

Professional counselors are available 24/7 by calling 800-327-5071.

A variety of educational and supportive resources are available online at www.wseap.com.