Take charge of holiday stress



We're right in the middle of the holiday season. Are you feeling cool, calm and collected — or is your stress level rising? If you're relaxed and happy, that's wonderful! But for many, holiday stress can reach an all-time high. If cooking, shopping, sending cards and decorating have you feeling frazzled, you're not alone.

Make a decision to dial down the stress

Even in the midst of the holidays, you have control over your choices. It's not too late to make changes that can help you feel better and enjoy the season more.

Need a little mid-holiday tune-up? Consider these ideas:

- **Cut back on spending.** Overspending is a common source of holiday stress. Review your upcoming expenses and look for ways to save — even small changes can make a difference.
- **Be mindful of holiday eating.** Many people gain extra weight this time of year. To help manage:
  - Eat regular, balanced meals so you don't arrive at parties overly hungry.
  - Limit yourself to one trip through the buffet.
  - Choose your treats wisely and ask your host about healthier options.
- **Check your mood-o-meter.** Disrupted routines and extra activities can impact your mood and energy. If you're feeling tired, overwhelmed or sad, know that it's normal — especially if the holidays aren't perfect.



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6885100-01-01-RFL (12/25)



The solution? Take care of yourself

Push away stress by taking better care of yourself starting today.

- **Prioritize sleep.** Aim for 6–8 hours each night to help you feel your best.
- **Keep moving.** Exercise is a natural stress reliever — treat it as a non-negotiable appointment.
- **Respect your limits.** You don't have to attend every event or say yes to every invitation. Do what feels right for you.
- **Be honest about your feelings.** If you're struggling with relationships, juggling finances or missing loved ones, reach out to a friend, spiritual leader or mental health professional.

Remember, real life continues during the holidays. Keep your expectations realistic for work, personal life and holiday celebrations. Taking care of yourself helps you feel better physically, mentally and emotionally.

Want more tips for a healthier, happier holiday season? Visit your member website for resources and support to help you stress less and enjoy each day more.

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6885100-01-01-RFL (12/25)
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