



Cheer

Give yourself the gift of happier holidays

Aetna Resources For LivingSM

For many people, the holiday season is a time for good cheer, shopping and family gatherings. For others, the holidays can be a hard time. Many people feel more stress, disappointment, guilt and sadness this time of year.

Do any of these statements sound like you?

- All your free time leading up to the holidays is booked with errands and shopping.
- You spend more than you budgeted on gifts and holiday items.
- You said “yes” to too many parties and events.
- You won’t get a full night’s sleep until after January 1.
- You end up doing most of the work for family gatherings.
- You honestly can’t wait until the holidays are over.

If any of these are true for you, you can do something about it. You can control how much you choose to do or not do. You can make changes in the ways you celebrate the holidays.

Tips for a happier holiday

- **Be reasonable.** Don't expect perfection.
- **Give yourself and others a break.** Don't get upset if things don't go as planned.
- **Enjoy the magical time of the year.** But don't expect it to solve your personal or family problems.
- **Manage your time.** Let others know what you can and can't do. Don't say "yes" when you really mean "no."
- **Make a master to-do list.** Write down everything you need to buy, make, bake or send. Now work on cutting down the list. What can you leave out?
- **Take care of yourself.** Watch what you eat and drink. Get enough sleep and make time for exercise.
- **Shop within your budget.** Worrying about money adds to the stress of the holiday season.
- **Give some of your holiday tasks to other family members.**
- **Carefully choose the events you want to attend.** Celebrate with people whose company lifts your spirits. Focus on the true meaning of the holidays for you.

- **Welcome each moment along the way and not just the "special day."** For example, have fun with decorating the house, baking cookies, gift-wrapping, etc.
- **If you're away from family and friends, or have experienced the loss of a loved one, share your feelings of grief.** Keep the demands on your time, energy and wallet to a minimum. It's okay to pass on an activity if you're not feeling up to it.

We can help you stress less through the holiday season. Setting healthy limits is key to keeping the holidays a favorite time of the year.



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