

Tips for Reducing Holiday Stress

- ❑ **Be realistic:** The holidays are not always going to be perfect, or go according to plan. By setting realistic goals and intentions, you are limiting your frustrations and anger should something unexpected arise.
- ❑ **Change your mindset and vocabulary:** Try to avoid thinking, *'I have/need to...'* or *'I should...'* instead incorporate words like, *'I choose to...,' 'It would be great if...'* or *'What if?'*
- ❑ **Keep moving:** Maintain your regular exercise routine or cut back on one routine if you don't have time. Not only is exercising a great way to shed some holiday stress, but it will also allow you to maintain some control during an unstructured time. You can even incorporate a new tradition by going on a family hike or bike ride together.
- ❑ **Eat wisely and well:** Over indulging with alcohol and sugar can lead to low energy, sugar crashes, and even guilt. Eat mindfully to avoid a change in energy and mood. Choose your indulgence wisely; for example, enjoy a slice of the family pie that only gets made this time of year, rather than loading up on chips and dip.
- ❑ **Be more inclusive:** Instead of trying to cook for every family event or tradition, have a holiday potluck and ask guests to bring their favorite dish or family recipe.
- ❑ **Expensive or big gifts are not always better:** Gift your loved ones with experiences rather than material things. For example; create a jar or box filled with family/date/friend events that you can do together throughout the year; a trip to a museum, a family games or movie night at home, a favorite dinner cooked, a memory book, a pampering night, can all be included.
- ❑ **Check in with yourself regularly.** Take time to pause and ask yourself how you're doing. If you find that you're feeling anxious, stressed, or overwhelmed, take a step back. A simple 5 minute walk around the block or up the street can help you to relax as you get some fresh air and a moment of quiet.