



Stressed Spelled Backwards is Desserts

Holiday Stress

If you've ever felt like you just can't wait for the holiday season to be over, you are not alone. Many people dread the holiday seasons and feel exhausted by all the excitement and group activities. This is normal and affects people of every age, demographic, and income bracket.

In a 2019 article by John Anderer, a survey showed that many Americans struggled to find time to relax during the holidays and felt an increased level of stress. The survey reported that:

- * 56% of Americans responded that it was the increased financial burden that was the primary cause
- * 48% cited the biggest source of stress was finding gifts for everyone on their list
- * 35% found attending family or group events as the most stressful part of the holidays
- * 29% listed putting up decorations as what sent their stress to a new high

In this same article it shows that for many people, stress starts to build as early as the beginning of November. You can read more on this article [here](#).



Strategy 1—Cut yourself some Slack

- **Shop so you don't drop**—Try taking a day off from work during the end of November or beginning of December and hit the stores before the crowd. Try to stay away from high traffic times like evenings or week-ends. Make trips back to your car to drop off purchases so you don't have to carry to much at once.
- **Treat yourself**—Shopping can be very draining. Take a break after shopping and indulge yourself with a small gift or special treat- nothing too expensive, but a little pick-me-up to get you through the rest of your trip.
- **Skip the "Nutcracker"**—The point behind this is to not drag yourself and your family to every big event out there. Pick a couple to go to and make it a special occasion. You can always rotate which events you attend from year-to- year.
- **Stretch the season**—Holiday events are often stacked on top of each other throughout December. Try planning your Holiday bash earlier in the month or even in January to reduce some of the schedule overlap.

Strategy 2—Put Stress in Perspective

- **Zero in on stress points and fix them**—Holidays are often a vicious cycle with overindulgence which can result in stress. Find what stresses you most and break it down into bite size pieces that are easier to manage.
- **Lower you expectations**—Expect some imperfections at your family gathers and holiday preparations. By expecting them, you can accept them and focus on being more in the moment and celebrating you reason for the season.
- **Don't go it alone**—A lot of people struggle with the holidays because they have to go through them alone. Be proactive and reach out to family, friends, and others in order to make the most of the holidays.

Strategy 3—More fun less stuff!

- **Remember the reason for the season**—Take some time and make the season personal. Reaffirm what the holidays mean to you whether it's family, community, or religion.
- **Follow your holiday bliss**—Think about what truly matters to you and celebrate it. It could be to take a break for week and renting a cabin in the middle of the woods to enjoy yourself and leave behind the hustle and bustle. It could also mean celebrating traditions that are important to you and your family/friends. The main thing is to make sure you do something to make yourself happy.

Did You Know?

Finances and stress can be closely linked to the holidays!
Here are a few tips to combat holiday financial stress early!

- Create a spending plan include names of who your buying for, gift ideas, and spending limits.
- Start saving for holiday spending early and make it part of your budget.
- Utilize holiday club accounts at your local bank.

