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# CAP JOURNAL

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## *Holiday Stress Busters and Keeping the Season Bright* *By Jeanie Jones, LBP, LADC*

**"Tis the Season to be Jolly!"** What happens when you don't feel jolly?

What happens when the "spirit" of the season gets lost and you just feel tired? By some pre-planning and lowering of expectations, you can make your holidays brighter and contribute to the peace and goodwill of all those around you.

### **Keep it Simple**

Do things you want to do. If there are traditions that no longer hold meaning for you and your family, it is OK to give those up and/or create some new ones. Don't try to be all things to all people. If you work full-time, serving a full course meal to a large crowd may not be possible.

### **Ask for Help**

If you decide to do a big family meal, ask for help. Assign dishes for others to bring or be adventurous and have complete pot luck.

### **Get enough Rest**

Say no to some of those Holiday Invitations. If you are too worn out you will not enjoy the festivities and will not make it to the Big Day. Leave early. If it is an event you think you need or want to make an appearance at, maybe it is acceptable to go home before the place closes down.

### **Don't Overindulge**

Food, wine, beer, soda, coffee....all those things that in moderation, for most people, are no big deal, can be disastrous when you are already over stressed and overextended. If you must go to an event which will have temptations, take a supportive buddy with you.

### **Keep Up your Healthy Routines**

Exercise, prayer, meditation, therapy, talking with family and friends are all a part of what keep us healthy. Under times of high

stress and high stimulation, it is more important than ever to keep these routines going.

#### **Embrace New Traditions**

If money is tight, get together with family members and plan some events that cost little or no money. Set a spending limit, give services or hand made gifts, agree to do small stocking stuffers, donate or volunteer at a soup kitchen, gather together and sing songs or play games.

#### **Plan in Advance**

Don't wait until the last minute to shop; you'll be tempted to spend more. Don't wait until the last minute to plan meals, cook ahead and delegate dishes to others.

#### **Remember the Children**

Kids get stressed, too. Keeping up with routines, letting them know the schedule, making sure they eat, get plenty of rest and exercise can help them have stress-free holidays, too.

#### **Blended Families**

When there are many homes to visit, ask for support from ex-s to schedule the family gathering in the least stressful way for all of you, including the children. Let the extended family know the plan and ask that they do not ask for last minute changes.

#### **Helpful Reminders about Families and Holidays**

Families are real, not like what you see on television, and with that comes normal squabbles and disagreements and although we cannot control others but we can control our reactions. Something may go wrong, especially if there are kids involved; learn to take it in stride and you'll enjoy the holidays more.

We can't always be with our loved ones during the holidays, but we can find other ways to celebrate and make the season special. We can also celebrate holidays or special times with our family any day of the year.

With all the emphasis on being a happy during this season, those suffering from depression can have worsening symptoms and those who are not depressed can have a dip in moods. If you find yourself blue, remember that can be normal. Reach out to friends and family and if you are in need of a professional to talk to, call your Employee Assistance Provider, CAP, 405-947-2688 or 800-677-2729. We are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



***CAP WISHES YOU ALL A SAFE HAPPY HOLIDAY  
SEASON AND A HEALTHY NEW YEAR IN 2009***

