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## **Holiday Survival tips**

10 basic strategies to more gracefully survive holiday stress.

Written by L. John Mason, Ph.D., Author of the Bestseller; [Guide to Stress Reduction](#).

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**Are expectations of happiness in the holidays making you sad?**

**Do you want to be happier and healthier this holiday season?**

**Would you like to enhance your holiday stress management skills?**

This holiday season will be stress filled. World economic swings and terrorism have created conditions that have changed our holiday celebrations. Attitudes towards travel, being with family, celebration in the face of fear and sadness, will make this year's holiday season different than in years past. Adjustments will help to create new ways of participating in the holiday events. These can be both positive and negative. Consider new traditions in self-care. Search for community support that will open your heart to the joys that are possible in this season.

Remember the things that are the most stressful are the things that you care the most about, but have the least control over. World events, the economy, the way people respond, and our families (and children) are major stressors that we wish we could control, but often cannot.

### **1. Schedule Time for Self-Care!**

Regular exercise and time for stress management are a must. Find what techniques work best for you, and use these tools. This is non-negotiable time devoted for your health and well being.

### **2. Eat Well**

Moderation is the key. Do not use alcohol or drugs for stress management. Do not "over" celebrate. Avoid fast foods.

### **3. Avoid Caffeine**

Minimize the impact of caffeine on your life.

### **4. Plan the Holiday...**

Set some limits. Do not over spend your financial and emotional resources.

### **5. Control Your Expectations of:**

Happiness, Joy, Sadness, and Loneliness

### **6. Be Nice to Others**

Give compliments and smile. Around negative, anxious, or rude people, take a breath and remember that you do not need to get pulled into other people's holiday misery or their craziness.

### **7. Reach Out for Support**

Talk with "stable" friends or family, or clergy, or mental health counselors.



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## **8. Humor Helps...**

Have Fun Laugh daily, if possible.

## **9. Stay in the Present!**

Mentally and emotionally, do not be consumed by things that happened in the past or fear events in the future. Enjoy the people you are with and make the very best of the situation that you are in.

## **10. Find the True Spirit of the Holidays**

Share "the Spirit" of this holiday with those people who you love or care about. Give love and support to the people of the world. Volunteer or go out of your way to be thoughtful and kind. A smile or a hug can go a long way. Sometimes it is just listening... Show others that they have value and that you are aware of their special qualities.

Even learn to let others give to you!