

# FREE HOLIDAY STRESS WORKSHOP

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## POTENTIAL SOURCES OF HOLIDAY STRESS AND AVOIDING THE POST-HOLIDAY LETDOWN

\* **Keep expectations manageable** by not trying to make "the best ever." Nobody can create or sustain the **Norman Rockwell picture-perfect** home and family. Set realistic goals.

\* **Don't be disappointed** if your holidays are not like they used to be. Life brings changes. **Don't set yourself up for sadness** by thinking everything has to be **just like the "good old days."** Look toward the future.

\* **Don't allow your expectations of the holidays to be dictated by magazine pictures or unrealistic scenes** from movies or television. Do the best you can with what you have to work with.

\* **Remember that the holiday season does not automatically banish reasons for feeling sad or lonely.** There is room for these feelings. Organize your time. Pace yourself

\* **Traditions** are very important for holiday celebrations. Take **time to share why the holiday is important and relate stories about what has happened in the past on this holiday.** Incorporating other family members into these stories will have special meaning to children.

\* **Do something for someone else.** Plan to share. It is an old remedy. **Try volunteering** some time to help others. Explain to children that helping and sharing are important elements of special holidays.

\* **Post a calendar** in a place where all family members will see it. Ask each person to remind you of school **events**, religious activities, parties, etc. Make sure that all activities are listed on the calendar.

\* **Establish a budget.** Check community calendars. Enjoy holiday activities that are inexpensive or free, such as driving around to look at holiday decorations. Go window-shopping without buying anything.

\* **Don't drink too much.** Drinking will only make you more depressed.

\* **Don't be afraid to try something new.** Celebrate the holidays in a way you have not done before. Do something different for the holidays. Record the life story of your favorite grandparent and then your least favorite grandparent. Write down your own life story for posterity and your grandchildren.

\* **Spend time with people who are supportive and who care** about you. Reach out to new friends. Contact someone with whom you have lost touch.

\* **Find time for yourself.** Don't spend all of your time providing activities for your family and friends. Take time to relax and reflect on the simple joys of the holidays. When becoming overwhelmed, take a break to get a better perspective on what needs to be done and what can be done.