

Stress Less Holiday



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Putting the Happy into your Holidays



"This is my wish for you: peace of mind, prosperity through the year, happiness that multiplies, health for you and yours, fun around every corner, energy to chase your dreams, joy to fill your holidays!" ~ David Dellinger

Do you have a love-hate relationship with holidays? I know I do...

Even though there is great tasting food, beautiful décor, soft fuzzy sweaters, and the music that only comes around once per year, *Holidays can be **STRESSFUL**!*

It's no wonder people can't wait for the holidays to help them escape into a time of family, fun, and festivities. While the idea of the holidays is always delightful, the realities can be quite overwhelming. Juggling an already busy schedule with added activities during the holidays can quickly take the wonder out of season and replace it with stress. What started as Happy Holidays becomes surviving the "**Holidaze**."

The holidays don't have to wear you out. There are many things you can do to reduce the stress and streamline your holidays. Believe it or not, you don't have to recreate a Hallmark Channel version of the holidays for them to be magical. It's entirely possible to decorate, host family, cook meals, entertain, *and still enjoy the season*. It's also entirely possible to celebrate the joy of the season while simultaneously managing significant loss.

Ultimately, **YOUR** holidays may not look like anyone else's, but that's the point. What makes your holidays happy may not look anything like what someone else is experiencing. The key is to focus on your unique needs and craft a holiday that makes the most sense under your circumstances.

This season, and each one after, should be a reflection of your life at the moment. If you're experiencing abundance with your finances, time, and energy, let the season reflect it. If yours is a lean year, allow yourself to modify your holiday to accommodate the needs you and your family have at the time.

There's no reason to struggle during the holidays. The season should give pause for reflection and celebration with family and friends. Keeping the focus on these things allows for the holidays to remain manageable rather than overwhelming.

3 Thieves that Rob your Holiday Spirit

Everyone starts with a tremendous holiday spirit—the mere idea of the holiday's sparks joy. Knowing anything is possible during the season creates a sense of wonder and delight *right when the first pumpkin spice latte hits the coffee shop*. Sadly, it doesn't always take long for one or more three thieves to rob your holiday spirit.

The three thieves of holiday spirit are

- **Finances**
- **Time**
- **Family**

Any of these, or all of them, tend to steal the joy you've mustered for the season. Sadly, what's supposed to be a happy time can quickly turn stressful when your money, time, or family are out of whack.

Finances have the potential to steal your holiday spirit

When cash is tight for the holidays, it can feel like a burden. Money problems tend to steal the holiday spirit from failing to plan or by an unexpected financial hit. The expectations for spending during the holidays can cause a lot of stress. Décor costs, gifts, meals, and attending extra activities can make a dent in your budget.

There are things you can do to help the budget. You can switch up your holiday plans or forgo some of the typical spending to help keep your holiday finances under control. To help you prepare, here is a simple [Christmas Budget Planner](#).

Time has the potential to steal your holiday spirit

There are only so many hours in the day. Though you could sleep less, that's not the best way to try to get everything done. The holidays come with a lot of time commitments. Extra shopping, holiday parties and activities, and time with family and friends can mix with your typical everyday needs. Overcommitment can zap your energy and rob you of your spirit. What should be a fun activity can become an intrusion or cause a headache. Taking control of your time during the holidays might be easier than you think. One book I dearly love on time management is Brian Tracy's [Eat That Frog](#). Instead of procrastinating, there are things you can do in the months leading up to the holidays that can help you have more time when you need it most.

Sometimes family has the potential to steal your holiday spirit

Family is one of the main reasons to get excited about the holidays, yet family can also be a chief thief of your holiday spirit. Sadly, dysfunction doesn't take a break from October through January. Sometimes the people you want to spend time with cause

problems that make it hard to enjoy them, and sometimes you're forced into family time with people you'd rather avoid. It's possible to set limits and set boundaries that help you *and your family* have the best holiday possible.

Tips for Creating Drama-Free Holidays

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – they must be felt with the heart. ~ Helen Keller

As much as I love the holidays, sometimes some people are hard to get along with even for short periods. You know, maybe an extended family member or a guest a family member has brought along.

Sadly, some people cause drama that can disrupt the holiday spirit. Strong personalities, addictions, and other issues can affect a gathering's harmony and make it harder than it should be to have a good time. According to Howard Rainie, +

"There are physical, mental, and spiritual characteristics of an emotional pain addict. Some Call it toxic love addiction."

Creating a drama-free holiday is vital for the people who genuinely want to be together and enjoy quality family time. It might feel tough to confront difficult issues, but it can make a big difference in the quality of your holiday time.

Consider these tips for creating drama-free holidays everyone can enjoy.

Tip- Create a drama-free experience- If addiction issues have the potential to ruin your holiday entertaining, create a drug and alcohol-free event. Removing the temptations and making modifications to your gathering that support sobriety helps everyone.

Tip- Consider your guests- Trying to fit square pegs into round holes never works. Sometimes you've got to be honest about the family members and friends in your life. Some simply can't play well with others. It may be in everyone's best interest to keep certain people away from each other.

Tip- Be willing, to be honest- One of the biggest reason's families experience drama is the unwillingness to address the situation. People want to avoid conflict or hope people figure out the impact they make on other people. Generally, this doesn't work. Being upfront and being honest with people about how their behavior affects others can help them modify it or excuse themselves from the situation if they must. It can be tough to confront negative behavior, but it can make the holiday better for most people.

Money-Saving Dos and Don'ts for Happy and Financially Healthy Holidays



One of the fastest ways people get overwhelmed during the holidays is by overspending. Being financially unprepared for the holiday season leads to bad habits and poor choices that have serious repercussions at the beginning of the new year.

Holiday spending is more than buying gifts. It's usually a bunch of small things that add up. Things like the following-

- Décor
- Groceries
- Extra activities
- Extra giving/donations
- Gifts

Money leaking out here and there for expenses you don't have any other time of year adds up and can cause debt or overspending. Stress starts building up with each purchase and what should be a fun time of year starts to feel overwhelming.

You don't have to overspend or go into debt trying to make the holidays magical. Pay attention to these dos and don'ts to help keep your financial health during the holidays. Here are a beautiful [Budget Planner and Monthly Bill Organizer](#) that I love. It helps you stay on track and focused on setting monthly goals and budget.

DO- Create a holiday budget before the holidays start- Every year is different. Some years there are more resources for the holidays and some years are lean. So, make a budget before the holidays based on your current financial situation. Then keep to your plan to help prevent overspending.

DO- Find fun and unique ways to make some extra cash- Host an annual yard sale or offer a side hustle that brings in some extra money each year. Finding fun ways to make more money helps you cover the additional costs you have during the holiday season. Enlist the family and encourage them to earn extra cash to buy gifts or personal items during the season. Here is a source for some unexpected ideas for [making extra money](#).

DO- Cherry-pick your holiday must-haves before spending- There are unlimited ways to spend during the holidays. Everything associated with the holidays is bright and

shiny and can make impulse buying hard to avoid. Be decisive about what matters most to you during the season and focus your attention and your dollars on those items and activities and leave the rest for someone else to enjoy.

DON'T- Worry about what other people do- It's an age-old concept but still rings true. You shouldn't worry about what your neighbors are doing. You don't need to keep up with anyone else nor be influenced by their spending. Focus on your family and what makes sense for your unique needs during the holidays.

DON'T- Forget the benefits of getting ahead of the game- Procrastination can cause overspending. Don't put off tasks like food shopping or other errands that strain your budget. The earlier you take care of things, the easier it is to find deals and be more relaxed. An example could be purchasing all of your non-perishable food items for all holiday meals in one early shopping trip. Get this task out of the way and free up time during the rest of the season.

DON'T- Allow guilt to make you overspend- It's hard to say no when you want to say yes. Financially, it may not be possible to do everything without going into debt or making a poor financial decision. Don't allow guilt to drive you. The holidays magnify emotional feelings. Set healthy limits that keep your finances under control, and don't feel guilty for being smart with your money.

Spending can be at an all-time high during the holidays. There are a lot of expenses that come with celebrating, which have the potential to strain your budget. Don't let the holidays cost you your happiness, sanity, or more. Keep your spending in perspective and enjoy a happy and financially healthy season.

Boundaries-The Key to a Joyful Season

"To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To you respect." ~ Oren Arnold

There's are Grinches and Scrooges out there during the holidays, and they have the potential to affect you. So, prepare ahead and set some healthy boundaries. People have many reasons why they aren't at their best during the holidays, but their lousy mood doesn't need to affect you.

The authors of the book, Boundaries, say "Boundaries define your soul, and they help you to guard it and maintain it"

Here are the steps you need to set healthy boundaries for a joyful season

Step 1. Be aware- Some people are going to be negative. Be aware. Be on the alert for people who have bad attitudes. Keep your radar up and recognize them quickly. Recognizing someone is hostile or draining can help you set up your boundaries rapidly.

Step 2. Have a plan- Prevention is worth more than the cure. That means it's easier to prevent a problem than it is to overcome it once you're in it. Having a plan for dealing with difficult people ahead of time helps. If you encounter a mean person during the check out in the store, resolve not to take it personally, or match their mood. Have a plan to be kind no matter what. You may even help make their day better with your bright attitude.

Step 3. Work the plan- It's one thing to have a plan and another to work it. When people test your boundaries, it's sometimes hard to stay calm. But practice makes perfect. The more intentional you are about setting healthy boundaries, the easier it will be. People will push up against your limits, but don't allow negative people to affect or infect your holiday spirit.

Here are some simple boundaries that can help make your season joyful

Boundary- No gossip- Keep your holiday gatherings positive by refusing to gossip about other people or negative situations.

Boundary- No guilt- Keep your joy this holiday by refusing to feel guilty when you need to decline an invitation or choose not to participate in an activity.

Boundary- No reactions- It's unrealistic to think someone won't be aggressive or challenge your limits. Keep calm and remember you are not responsible for how someone else reacts to you. You are responsible for your behavior. Staying calm and rational is always the best way.

Pro-tips for Holiday Gatherings that Save your Sanity

Holiday gatherings can be a lot of fun, *plus a lot of work!* What's meant for enjoyment can quickly turn into a headache and affect your sanity. Sometimes the idea of a gathering is way more fun than executing a big event. What started as an idea to host people turns into a laundry list of things that need to get done.

Thankfully, there are some great tips out there for hosting happy holiday gatherings that will save your sanity.

Sanity saving tip #1. *Hire some help!* If you're hosting a holiday party, consider hiring help with some or all of the prep and execution. You can easily hire assistance with:

- Cleaning your home before the event
- Party planning and decorating
- Grocery shopping (Most stores offer curbside pickup or delivery)
- Catering (if you prefer not to cook)
- Clean up post-event

If you are short on time but long on holiday spirit, you can easily hire some help to get your gathering in order so you can spend quality time with your guests.

Sanity saving tip #2. *Choose your guest list with intention.* Some folks simply don't mix well. Some activities aren't great for every type of guest. Save yourself headaches by ensuring the partygoers are perfect for mixing and mingling, so your gatherings are energetic and fun. Choose activities that your specific group of people will enjoy and be eager to participate.

Sanity saving tip #3. *Don't procrastinate.* One of the biggest drains on a good time is feeling pressure to perform. Failing to plan and take care of tasks early can make it hard to feel relaxed and calm before your gathering. Make lists, execute, and get ready for your party in plenty of time to be able to enjoy your company and the season.

Sanity saving tip #4. *Make clean up a breeze.* Creating gatherings that clean up easily can help end the night on a happy note. Have plenty of storage containers ready, use disposable products for a faster clean up, and enlist helpers to make light work. Take the time to clean up before you retire for the night to avoid waking up to a large and overwhelming mess.

Stress Less with These Thanksgiving Day Reminders



There's a lot that goes into executing a Thanksgiving Day feast. Prepping for the day, cooking, cleaning, and making sure things are just right can take its toll. It's normal for people to feel stressed, *even when they are trying to feel blessed.*

In all the hustle and bustle, the true meaning of the holiday might get lost, so it's essential to take a deep breath and remind yourself of what's most important. Here are some Thanksgiving reminders that will help

you and your family stress less and enjoy the holiday.

Stressless reminder- *You've got a lot to be thankful for.* Thanksgiving isn't about food. It's about gratitude. Celebrating the holiday without reminding yourself what you have to be grateful for would be a waste. Be sure to find gratitude in the simplest things. There's something about being grateful that diminishes worries and stress. Sure, you've got things to feel overwhelmed about, but there is so much more to be thankful for!

Stressless reminder- *People don't care how clean your home is.* It might feel overwhelming and stressful prepping for the company and hosting people. The urge to clean can lead to the desire to redecorate, paint walls, and more. Don't let prep get out of hand and stress you out. Most people won't notice dust bunnies or some clutter. Stressless by doing what you can before your gathering and not worrying about what you can't get done. If the meal is excellent and the company is fun, what more can you ask?

Stressless reminder- *Cherish people because time is short.* We never know what the future holds. It's essential to cherish people while they are here. If you rarely see family outside of the holidays, be sure to soak up as much time with them as you can. Stressless by prioritizing quality time with family and friends and letting go of chores, expectations, and duties that prevent you from staying connected. When it's all said and done, people won't recall what you fed them for the Thanksgiving meal, but they will remember how you made them feel when you were together.

Including Others at Thanksgiving Can Change a Life

"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?" ~ Bob Hope

If you've got a big family, your guest list might be full for Thanksgiving. There's nothing more fun than the tradition of hosting the same family and friends for a gathering year after year. Seeing the same faces and enjoying their company is likely something you look forward to every season, but have you ever thought about adding to your guest list?

Including people, you might not regularly see on your guest list can impact and change a life. There are many reasons why people don't have any place, in particular, to go during Thanksgiving. Being aware and open to including others can impact their mental health during the holiday.

As you ramp up for the special day, pay attention to people who could benefit from a special invitation to join you and your friends and family. There are likely people in unexpected situations that would welcome an opportunity to gather rather than be alone. Some ideas could include-

Host a college student who is far from home- College students come from all over. Many are far from home and don't have the time or the finances to go home for Thanksgiving. If you have college-aged children, encourage them to invite students to come to your home for Thanksgiving and enjoy a taste of home.

Host a widow or someone newly divorced- Life changes don't get put on hold during the holiday. If you know of someone who is recently widowed, divorced, or somehow finds themselves alone, be sure to include them in your gathering. Your gesture can help them avoid depression or added loneliness that magnifies during the holidays. They may not be in the best of spirits due to their life situation, but you can offer them comfort and joy and help them find gratitude despite what they are going through.

Host someone in the area for medical treatment- Did you know many people travel out of their hometowns for medical treatment. Some families are often displaced for other reasons too. Pay attention to your network of friends and family and be on the lookout for people traveling or staying in your area for unexpected reasons, which would benefit from the social connection on Thanksgiving. Offer to include them in your celebration and help them feel less alone.

Including others at Thanksgiving can change a life. It's hard to be alone on days when most people are celebrating. Being aware of those vulnerable, lonely, and needing support makes it possible for you to be a bright spot in their lives and truly make a difference.

Thanksgiving Activities that Create Lasting Memories

"Love the giver more than the gift" ~ Brigham Young

Thanksgiving is usually all about the food. There's not much better than a wonderful meal shared with those you love. Since it is traditionally meant for feasting, there's also time for fun. Thanksgiving is a great time to engage in activities that create lasting memories.

Create Thanksgiving traditions that last

There are lots of fun traditions that your family can engage in centered on Thanksgiving fun. Consider some of these-

Turkey trot- Many communities offer a fun run or family walk on Thanksgiving Day. What a healthy way to start the holidays. These events are good for groups, including dressing up or creating dynamic and friendly competition. Generally, the events support local non-profits, which adds to the benefit of the community.

Family meal prep- Some families designate individual meal prep to specific family members, making it a tradition to prepare a particular food item. It can be a fun activity and gives unique ownership for the task. One person might be the official potato peeler while another becomes the baker of pies. Assigning tasks makes meal prep simpler and more memorable.

A unique spin on an old standard- Some families enjoy taking a unique spin on tradition. Instead of baking the turkey, they fry it or forgo turkey altogether for something fun like prime rib, lamb, or ham. Taking an old favorite and making it unique to your family creates lasting memories that stand out over time.

Living history- Thanksgiving is a great time for extended family to come together. As the family gets older, it's crucial to preserve your family's history and share the ages' wisdom. Use Thanksgiving as a time to share stories between generations. Have children prepare questions for their older relatives and spend time listening to their stories.

Shop 'till you drop- Black Friday is the biggest shopping day of the year. Not only are the deals amazing, but the people watching can also be equally fun. Some people enjoy the tradition of braving the sales at midnight. If this is your thing, have fun with it and enjoy the chaos.

Thanksgiving is a great time to come together and enjoy one another's company. Why not make it more fun by engaging in purposeful activities that create lasting memories.

Crafting a Christmas Mission Statement Helps Reduce Holiday Stress



“Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas” ~ Calvin Coolidge

The holidays come around every year, and each year brings the promise of magic and wonder. Christmas delights entire families and gets them excited for gifts, celebrations, and time off from regular routines. The excitement generated by Christmas can quickly fade when things start to feel overwhelming. Without proper planning, Christmas time can morph into a stressful time filled with too many activities and not enough resources to meet your expectations. Luckily, there's a simple way to avoid stress during Christmas time.

In the same way, that mission statements serve business, but they can also benefit families. When it comes to Christmas, having a mission statement can help families make decisions that support their mission and reduce stress, spending time on things that don't suit their mission.

A sample mission statement for Christmas could be- ***To focus on family and friends making memories that last.*** Another could be- ***To use the season as an opportunity to serve others.***

Taking the time to define what matters most helps remove any doubt about putting your emphasis and setting healthy boundaries. If your family mission is to serve others, it makes sense to set aside resources to donate or volunteer during the holidays while

giving up other activities. If your mission is to focus on family and friends, it makes sense that you would plan family-oriented activities.

Try these tips for creating your Christmas mission statement

Tip- *Involve the whole family.* Make creating your mission statement a family affair. Involve everyone in determining what matters most to them and crafting a mission statement that reflects the season's goals. It might be something unique like- *to experience Christmas as a family on vacation.*

Tip- *Write out your mission statement and post it.* Ensure your mission statement is front and center to remind your whole family what they have agreed is their focus for a holiday.

Tip- *Weigh your choices against one another.* When faced with decisions about what to do with your spending, time, and obligations, weigh them against your mission. If the opportunity doesn't support the agreement, it's an easy no.

One of the easiest ways to reduce stress during Christmas time is to create a mission statement. It can help your family identify their primary focus for the season and avoid unnecessary stress.

Tips for Reducing your Giving Without Feeling Like a Scrooge

Being generous is essential. There's no more excellent time of year to give than during the holidays, but it doesn't take long for the list of opportunities outgrows your ability to be generous. Sometimes you've got to cut back, which can leave you feeling guilty and fearful of being perceived as a Scrooge.

There are plenty of great reasons to give and be generous, but your resources may not always be as significant as your heart. What can you do when you need to reduce your giving without feeling horrible? Try these ideas out-

Idea! *Try reducing your overall gift-giving budget.* If you are in the habit of giving extravagant gifts, try reducing your price point per person to make the budget stretch. Lowering your spending per person can help without cutting out the number of people you give to.

Idea! *Give time rather than money.* Giving gifts and making monetary donations come out of your bank account. Why not give the gift of time instead. Create coupon books with vouchers for a particular time with friends and family. You can postpone your spending until they cash in their coupons. Instead of making monetary donations to your

favorite charities, consider doing some volunteer work throughout the year to offer an equally valuable resource.

Idea! *Reassess your giving guidelines.* Over time, you may find you are under pressure to give gifts to an ever-growing list of friends and family. Times change, and it's ok to assess and re-evaluate your giving guidelines. Some fun gift-giving guidelines could include-

- Only buy gifts for kids under 16
- Doing a numbered gift exchange with adult family members
- Opting out of gift-giving outside of the immediate family
- Setting a spending cap on gifts

Once you've made the best decision for your family, rest assured that you can give confidently without feeling like a Scrooge.

Idea! *Get crafty with your giving.* Try making gifts that have low-cost investments. Body scrubs, décor, and other DIY items can cost pennies to make, but their personal touch has excellent value. Search the web for fun do it yourself gifts you can make in bulk and give to lots of people.

Idea! *Give a group gift.* Who doesn't enjoy Christmas movies? Try something like this [13 movie collection](#) of popular Christmas stories on DVD. Hallmark-Thomas Kinkadee-Norman Rockwell-Most Wonderful Time and more.

Christmas means something different to everyone who celebrates it. No two families are experiencing the holiday the same. You must feel confident setting limits and creating spending plans that make sense for you and your family's finances. Be generous, but not to the point you face going into debt. Find fun ways to give without feeling stressed or like a Scrooge.

There's Value in Creating a Holiday Newsletter

There never seems to be enough time during the holidays. Connecting with family and friends is essential all year, but especially during the holidays. One of the easiest ways to connect and engage your friends and family is through a newsletter.

There's lots of value in creating a holiday newsletter. Holiday newsletters tend to-

- **Saves costs**
- **Keeps people connected and informed**
- **Build a community**

Holiday newsletters save time and money- There was a time when sending holiday cards was normal. But the rising cost of postage can make a big dent in your holiday budget. Thankfully, you can send a holiday newsletter by post or electronically. Crafting one letter that everyone can read can save a lot of time too.

Holiday newsletters keep people connected and informed- A well-written newsletter can fill everyone in on the highlights from your year. Sharing the highs and the lows that made the most significant impact on you and your family brings everyone on the same page with how your year went. Everyone's updated on what's going on without making a bunch of calls or emails.

Holiday newsletters build community- People come to love and expect your annual updates. It forms a sort of tradition that people look forward to. Have fun with the project and expand on it when you have the time and resources. You can make your newsletter a video or add fun pictures to enhance the experience.

Typical things to include in an annual newsletter

Your newsletter can include anything you think your friends and family will find interest in. Focus on the highlights from the year.

- Any significant changes that occurred
- Babies born or people who have passed away
- Graduations
- Weddings
- Eventful vacations
- AND MORE!

If you find something interesting about your life, chances are those close to you will as well. Enjoy sharing the events and activities that shaped your life and encourage your friends and family to send you news of their past year too.

Newsletters are a personalized way to connect with many people at once without much effort. It's a beautiful way to let people know you are thinking of them and want to make sure you stay connected. Getting a newsletter can brighten someone's holiday season and help keep and maintain healthy friendships.

Giving Back Helps Make Christmas Merry and Bright



Christmas creates a sense of excitement and wonder that energizes people of all ages. Knowing your family and friends are ready and willing to celebrate with you makes things even better. It's a beautiful time to reflect on how much you have to be thankful for and ways you can give back to those who routinely make your world better.

When it comes to giving, we often think of friends and family and put them at the top of our list. While it's essential and fun to give to those we know and see the most, there are some people who you may want to recognize that isn't top of mind when you make your list.

There are people in your life who make it unique year-round. These people quietly do their work, and you may never give them a second thought. Thinking of them and giving back could make their Christmas merrier and brighter. Consider these people when giving back this season.

Letter carriers- Your letter carriers, delivery people, and other service providers are part of your everyday life. They deliver your mail and packages all year long through all types of weather and with heavy responsibility. Consider giving them a thank you for their dedication.

Garbage services- It's a messy job, but someone has to do it. What would you do if you couldn't rely on your garbage man...or woman...to pick up your trash and take it away? Consider thanking them for doing a messy job most people want to avoid.

Yard maintenance- If you have help keeping your yard pristine, it's important to say thank you. Many workers make low wages, and they could benefit from your generosity during the holidays. Remember to say thank you when you see them during the holiday months.

School employees- Everyone thinks of teachers regarding the holidays, but what about the bus driver, lunch ladies, and custodians? It takes a village to help kids become their

best. Consider finding a way to say thank you to the forgotten staff at your child's school.

Giving back is a beautiful way to express the sentiments of the season. You don't have to spend a lot of money to say thank you. A card or small tip can go a long way towards showing someone you appreciate their hard work. Find ways to show your gratitude and give back to make someone's holiday merry and bright.

Gratitude is the Reason for the Season

“Thoughts turn to other’s just a little more this time of year. Days grow shorter and memories grow longer. Families and friends gather in celebration or hope. Giving is a reflection of our love and caring for each other and those less fortunate. May your thoughts turn to gratitude this holiday season and carry on throughout the new year”~ James A. Murphy III



Thanksgiving is a national holiday celebrated by Canadians and American's. Though the origins are different, the sentiment is essentially the same. Thanksgiving is a day set apart to celebrate the bounty and blessings of the year. It is reminding us to be thankful for the abundance and beautiful things that have happened.

Planning for the Thanksgiving holiday can be stressful. The costs associated with a big meal and hosting family can be overwhelming. There can be added stress if the holiday

comes when life's chaotic. The holidays shouldn't be burdensome. When you're struggling to find joy, it's important to center yourself and get back to the reason for the season.

Thanksgiving is about gratitude

Being grateful is a positive state of mind. Finding things to be thankful for can be hard when there's too much pulling at you. You needn't feel obligated to make the holiday a big show. Thanksgiving can be as simple as a small meal shared by immediate friends and family or as extravagant as a full traditional spread shared by everyone on your contacts list. It isn't about the food. It's about setting aside time to be grateful for the bounty you've experienced this year.

You can show your gratitude in many ways

Being grateful can be an inward or outward experience. Some people use Thanksgiving as a time to publicly share the people and things they are thankful. It's common to take time and give thanks for the abundance each person has before enjoying a meal. It is a great time to encourage younger family members to express their gratitude and help them understand the importance of being thankful.

New Year, New You-Reflecting on the Holiday to Make a Plan for Next Year

"New Year's Day is every man's birthday." ~ Charles Lamb

There's something remarkable about the new year. The promise of change and a clean slate gets everyone excited about the possibilities. There's no other time when people are more focused and willing to make changes to enhance their lives. Gym memberships, and more storage containers are sold at this time of year than any other.

The promise of a new year brings the promise of a new you too. What could be better? Everyone wants to do better, be better, and experience something better than the year before. The thing is, it takes intention and effort to make that happen. A new year and a new you is possible through reflection.

In the same way, you can create a new and better version of your holidays by reflecting on your current season and asking yourself some simple questions. Evaluating your holidays and looking for ways to make them better, more fun, and exciting is an excellent use of your time.

What did you enjoy most about your holiday season?

Asking yourself what worked about the holidays helps you determine what you want to continue doing next season. Did anything stand out in your mind as unique? Perhaps

something unexpected, like a special moment with your child or another family member. Maybe you tried something new that positively impacted your holiday. Being mindful of what you loved about the holiday can help you incorporate it into your upcoming holidays in the future.

What flopped during your holiday season?

Chances are, something wasn't ideal during the season. Perhaps you felt overwhelmed, or an activity you thought you'd love ended up being a waste of time. Being honest about what missed the mark can help you modify your next holiday and cut it out of the lineup. Check-in with your family and see what activities and experiences they want to drop as well. You might discover there's plenty of room for improving your holidays next year.

What was missing from your holiday season?

Asking yourself if you had to do it over, what would you do differently or want to include can help you make different choices. It may be that you've outgrown an activity or want to try something new and exciting. Asking yourself and your family what would make the next holiday season better can help you plan and get excited about the next holiday long before it gets here.



I am Shirley Noah, author, and internationally known stress expert. Founder of InGoodHealthCoach.com. I am passionate about you becoming more empowered with simple natural healthy habits that YOU can implement TODAY! I love to share my insights, empower women and their families to feel and live their best life through plant-based, whole-food nutrition, essential oils, healing herbs, easy-to-follow habits, and remedies to reduce *STRESS*.

I am not a doctor, so I can't give medical advice or say I can cure you.

I have been studying preventative health and wellness for over 25 years. I have learned how food promotes health and can reverse chronic diseases.

I have reclaimed my life from chronic illness through personal research and application.

I have struggled with chronic stress for years, and I have suffered its effects on my body.

Dr. Mark Hyman says that 95% of chronic diseases are caused by stress.

We need to treat the **whole** body—your mind, body, and spirit. Our thoughts and beliefs create a large portion of our stress today.

By using the techniques that I am going to show you today. I reclaimed my life by changing my lifestyle, healthy eating, and self-care techniques. My energy has increased, and physical and emotional health have leveled out.

I look forward to continuing our work together and wish you phenomenal success with your health wellness and stress control.

Shirley J Noah

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Course: [Optimize Your Self Talk](#)

Course: [Don't Panic: How to Find Inner Peace](#)

Latest Book: [Say No to Stress: A Practical Approach to Stress Management](#)