

# Coping With Holiday Stress:

## 10 Keys to Creating Healthy Holidays

### Seasonal Goals

- Identify the main sources of holiday stress
- Identify ways to manage holiday stress and make healthy choices
- Develop (and later put into practice) a plan for ensuring a healthier, happier holiday

### Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #1

- Let go of unrealistic expectations:
  - Can't recreate the past
  - Can't have perfect holidays

Fill in the blank: *One thing I'd like to have happen this holiday season that probably WON'T is:*

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### Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #2

- Acknowledge and express feelings honestly
- Give yourself permission to feel common feelings, like sadness from prior losses such as divorce, deaths, separation; anxiety, dread, pressures

Fill in the blank: *One thing I'm feeling today as the holidays are approaching is:*

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### Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #3

- If you tend to isolate yourself, keep busy
  - Invite others to get together
  - Be proactive, not reactive

Fill in the blank: *One friend or group I could get together with is:*

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# 10 Keys to Creating Healthy Holidays *(continued)*

## Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #4

- Re-evaluate your traditions because they might be too stressful or time consuming

Fill in the blank: *One "tradition" I may need to give up is:*

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## Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #5

- Don't expect extended-family problems to disappear just because it's the holiday season
  - Reduce the amount of time you plan to spend with difficult family members
  - Let go of past conflicts and resentments
  - Learn to forgive
  - Balance your own needs with your family's needs

Fill in the blank: *One positive family member I will spend time with is:*

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## Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #6

- Prepare for the extra intensity
  - Eliminate stressful or unnecessary activities and chores
  - Take quiet times to be rejuvenated

Fill in the blanks:

*One stressful activity I can abandon is:*

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*One "quiet time" activity I can enjoy is:*

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## Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #7

- Nurture yourself
  - Do something special for yourself

Fill in the blank: *One special thing I will do for myself is:*

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# 10 Keys to Creating Healthy Holidays *(continued)*

## Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #8

- If you are struggling with loneliness or loss:
  - Go to a place where you can find support and encouragement
  - Volunteer. Helping others can take the focus off one's own pain

Fill in the blank: *One activity I will do to help me deal with loneliness or loss is:*

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## Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #9

- Be careful about over-indulging
- **Eat, drink and spend** in *moderation*
  - Stick to nonalcoholic drinks
  - Get more exercise
  - Attend more events without food
  - Set spending limits

Fill in the blanks: *I will spend no more than \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per person on gifts.*

*One way I will get more exercise is to \_\_\_\_\_*  
*for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes each day.*

## Creating Healthy Holidays: Key #10

- Remind yourself of the true meaning of the holidays
  - Focus on what is most important about the holidays
  - Beware of excessive commercialism

Fill in the blank: *This year I will remind myself of the importance of:*

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