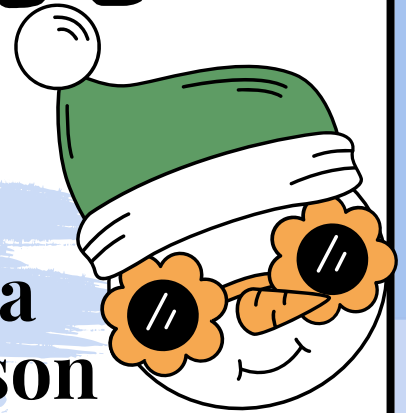


# HOLIDAY HARMONY GUIDE



## Practical Strategies for a More Joyful Holiday Season

Are the holidays more stressful than joyful for your family?  
You're not alone!

This Holiday Harmony Guide will give you practical strategies to  
transform your holiday experience.

Don't let the holidays drain your joy. Learn ways to reclaim the  
peace, love, and connection of the season, as your family's well-  
being is worth it.



**Youth Services Department  
Education & Training Center**



Created by Brittany Grimshaw, PsyD & Berlin Muñoz

# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR PRIORITIES

What activities and traditions bring you the most joy and fulfillment?

How do you want to feel during the holidays?

What values do you want your holiday season to reflect?

Are there any new experiences or traditions you'd like to incorporate into your holiday season?

# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR PRIORITIES

## Your Non-Negotiable's

**Myself**

**My Family**

**My Partner  
or Friends**

**Events**

**Work**

**Church or  
Volunteer**

# HOLIDAY OBLIGATIONS

**Myself**

**My Family**

**My Partner  
or Friends**

**Events**

**Work**

**Church or  
Volunteer**

# **MANAGING STRESS**

## **Holiday Stressor Checklist**

- Financial Pressure**
- Time Constraints**
- Family Dynamics**
- Social Obligations**
- Gift-Giving Pressure**
- Travel Stress**
- Unrealistic Expectations**
- Loneliness and Grief**
- Health Concerns**
- Overcommitment**
- Lack of Self-Care**
- Perceived Judgment**

# MANAGING STRESS

## Top 3 Stressors/Obligations:

**Stressor #1:**

**Stressor #2:**

**Stressor #3:**

# STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

1. Create a holiday playlist with your favorite upbeat songs.
2. Start a gratitude journal to reflect on positive experiences.
3. Make holiday themed crafts as a family activity.
4. Set aside quiet time for self-reflection and relaxation.
5. Plan a cozy movie night with holiday classics.
6. Bake holiday treats and share them with neighbors.
7. Write heartfelt letters to loved ones.
8. Try a new holiday recipe and experiment in the kitchen.
9. Do a puzzle or play board games with family.
10. Make a DIY spa day at home with candles and baths.
11. Watch a holiday light display in your neighborhood.
12. Create handmade gifts for friends and family.
13. Make a list of things you're proud of from the past year.
14. Have a karaoke night with holiday songs.
15. Practice affirmations to build self-confidence.
16. Do yoga in a park or your backyard.
17. Create a holiday budget to ease financial stress.
18. Have a no-complaint day to focus on positivity.
19. Find a cozy cafe to relax and unwind.
20. Write down your goals for the upcoming year.
21. Do a random act of kindness for someone you know.
22. Plant a tree or flowers to symbolize new beginnings.
23. Establish boundaries to protect your mental health.
24. Make a list of things that make you happy.
25. Host a cookie decorating party with friends or family.
26. Get moving with holiday themed fitness classes online.

# SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES

## Emotion

- Participate in hobbies.
- Get away from distractions (e.g. phone).
- Learn new things.
- Express my feelings through art.
- Regularly communicating with family/friends.
- Find reasons to laugh.
- Watching an enjoyable movie.
- Go on holidays or day trips.
- Recognizing/ celebrating your achievements.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Physical

- Eat healthy foods.
- Look after personal hygiene.
- Regular exercise.
- Do enjoyable activities.
- Getting good quality sleep.
- Get regular health checks.
- Taking time off/resting.
- Stretching/relaxation exercises.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Spiritual

- Spend time in nature.
- Meditate.
- Pray.
- Act in accordance with my values.
- Set aside time for thought and reflection.
- Participate in a cause that is important to me.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Social

- Spend time with people I like.
- Make a phone call to a friend.
- Have stimulating conversations.
- Meet new people.
- Spend time with my friends.
- Ask others for help when needed.
- Try a new class or activity.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



# SETTING BOUNDARIES

## Personal Boundaries

- Personal space and time:** taking time to reset and recharge.
- Unplugging:** designate specific times to unplug from work emails, social media, and other digital distractions to fully engage in holiday activities.
- Financial limits:** set a clear budget for holiday spending, communicate this budget with others if needed to set expectations.
- Alcohol consumption:** if you have concerns about alcohol consumption, let your host or friends know your limits and stick to them.
- Work-life balance:** if you work during the holidays, set boundaries with yourself, your employer, and colleagues to protect your time off and avoid temptation to work when you are “off”.
- Self-care time:** prioritize self-care activities, don't compromise on these practices.
- Dietary preferences:** communicate dietary restrictions or preferences to hosts to help lower stress or offer to bring a dish to help with the restrictions.
- Lack of self-care:** neglecting self-care practices can exacerbate stress during the holidays.

# SETTING BOUNDARIES

## Boundaries with Others

- Gift exchanges:** establish clear expectations for gift-giving. discuss spending limits. don't feel obligated to buy gifts for everyone.
- Health concerns:** colder weather, increased exposure to germs, and changes in diet affect health, being sick, worrying about being sick, and existing health issues can add to holiday stress
- Overcommitment:** trying to participate in every holiday event and taking on too many responsibilities can lead to stress. it's okay to say no when you can't or don't want to do something
- Conflict resolution:** establish guidelines for addressing conflicts or misunderstandings that may arise
- Perceived judgment:** people may feel judged by others leading to anxiety and stress
- Guest duration:** clearly communicating the length of time guests will stay during overnight visits
- Accepting help:** be open to accepting help, don't feel the need to do everything yourself
- Family dynamics:** if certain family members create stress, set boundaries for how you'll interact with them or when you'll take breaks to decompress

# HOLIDAY HARMONY PLAN

## Top 3 Holiday Priorities

### Stressors & Obligations

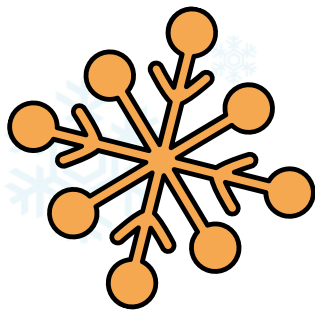
### Stress Management Strategies

## Self-Care Activities

## Important Boundaries

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