



FitBiz Watercooler Wellness

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GET CONTROL OF THE HOLIDAYS! – 5 Tips to Beat Holiday Stress

Ah, the holidays. They bring with them your grandma's amazing apple pie and "A Christmas Story" nostalgia. Unfortunately, they also usher in workplace deadlines, credit card debt, extra pounds, and loneliness. The holidays can be a difficult time of year. Whether it's family drama, anxiety, or the fear of missing out, the holiday blues can be difficult to beat. Listed below are five constructive ways to help make the holidays happier – or at least more bearable.

- 1. Create a To-Don't List:** Yes, you read that right. But first you need to make a to-do list. Once you write something down, you can avoid the stress of stewing about it. Then review each item, asking yourself: "Can I delegate this?" (maybe your spouse can buy prepared side dishes instead of you cooking all night) and "Can it wait until January?" (say, that basement clean-out you've been meaning to tackle). If the answer is yes to either, move it to your to-don't list. You'll feel lighter and better able to take on what's truly important.
- 2. Avoid Toxic People this Holiday Season:** The holidays are typically spent with family and friends – but that's not a requirement. Let's be honest. Not everyone is jolly around the holidays and sometimes our friends and family can be triggering and detrimental to our health. The holidays can bring up our own feelings of anxiety, depression, and general stress, so it may be a good idea to avoid those who are constantly spreading negativity.
- 3. Is it really worth the calories?** Avoid mindless eating and holiday weight gain by focusing on what is and isn't deserving of being indulged in. Ask yourself "Am I in a bad mood?" When you're feeling upset, put in the extra effort to eat healthfully. Even moderate stress may impair self-control and cause people to make poor food choices. Also ask "Could I just be thirsty?" As the weather gets colder, it's easy to forget to drink fluids, but staying hydrated can help keep hunger in check.
- 4. Stress Less Over Presents:** Stock up on host and hostess gifts such as a case of your favorite wine or a few boxes of chocolates so you always have a gift ready to go. Manage expectations by asking the children in your life to write down what they'd like to receive this year and promise they will get one or two items from the list. Knowing they're guaranteed a coveted present – as opposed to a bunch of random things – can help them savor what they receive.
- 5. Be Grateful for the People Around You:** Unfortunately the ones we love are not always around. Often, we dwell on the missing person so much that we forget about the people who are there. Although others will not fill the void left by your loved ones' absence, it is important to remember that you have other people who love and care about you. Be thankful for what you have and those you are with, rather than worrying about what you don't have.

