

HOLIDAY COPING STRATEGIES

TRY A “NOT-TO-DO” LIST

The list of things to do before the holidays can seem endless and overwhelming. The demands and requests for your time over the holidays can put a strain on your mental health. This holiday season make a “Not-to-do” list.



COOKING

Avoid the stress of taking on all the cooking yourself. Divide up holiday cooking with a potluck dinner, and delegate tasks like grocery shopping and kitchen clean-up to the non-cooks.

SHOPPING

Take the emphasis off material gifts by honoring holiday traditions. Bake cookies together, go skating, or volunteer together. Draw names for gifts and stick to assigned spending limits.

ERRANDS

Running holiday errands can take longer than expected with traffic, weather and long lines. Give yourself more time than usual to get through your errands to keep stress at bay. Try listening to an audiobook or podcast while driving.

Source:

<https://psychcentral.com/lib/the-christmas-not-to-do-list/>

HOLIDAY TRAVEL SOLUTIONS

Traveling over the holidays? A few extra steps during the planning and packing stages can minimize unforeseen situations and added stress while traveling.

PACKING

- Keep prescriptions, glasses and overnight basics in your carry-on bag.
- Include an empty packable shopping bag in your luggage in case you return with more items.
- Minimize your luggage by shipping gifts to family and friends or order online and ship directly to the recipient.

FLYING

- Book flights early in the day when the airport is less busy, and lines are shorter.
- Early bookings are more likely to be re-booked for same day travel if delays occur.
- Print out paper tickets instead of relying on e-tickets to speed up checking in.

DRIVING

- Plan to make stops and pick them out ahead of time—take a break, stretch and stay hydrated.
- Avoid using cruise control at night to stay alert.
- Make the drive more relaxed with an audiobook or playlist.



Sources:

<https://psychcentral.com/lib/dont-stress-holiday-travel/>

<https://coverhound.com/insurance-learning-center/10-ways-to-make-your-long-distance-drive-safer-and-more-enjoyable>

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PRACTICES TO HANDLE HOLIDAY STRESS

Pressure to spend on gifts, cook a perfect meal, and be jolly during the holidays can take its toll on your well-being.

PLAN A BUDGET FOR MORE THAN JUST GIFTS

Setting—and sticking to—a holiday budget is more than just planning for gift purchases. Set up a budget for extra groceries, drinks, parties and travel expenses. If you set a gift limit with an item in mind and find it on sale, avoid buying another gift to make up the difference.

BE REALISTIC

The holidays don't have to be perfect. Traditions can change over time—be open to creating new ones. Aim to accommodate busy schedules without being too hung up on celebrating on specific dates.

BE PROACTIVE IN FAMILY SITUATIONS

If you are concerned about difficult conversations at family gatherings, remember that these events are about coming together. Focus on good memories and plan activities that foster enjoyment. Play a family game or look through old photo albums to keep the mood light.



Sources:

<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-conversations>
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>
<https://health.usnews.com/wellness/mind/articles/2018-12-07/why-are-the-holidays-so-stressful>