

Tips help reduce holiday stress

I previously offered some suggestions to combat the propensity of allowing many situations and circumstances to create extra stress in our lives. Here are some ideas to keep things from getting too intense during this season (and it wouldn't be a bad idea to incorporate some of these ideas when making New Year's resolutions):

Divide the chores: Divide the family into responsibilities so no one person totes the load.

Let family and friends know what you are doing: It's OK to not send cards, make fruitcakes, or even give gifts. Let people know your intentions and, to your surprise, it will be fine. In fact, they will envy you.

Compromise on the excess of activities: Reduce your traditional activities based on your family's enjoyment level. Don't cram so much into a short time; spontaneity is a beautiful thing.

Consider your origins and traditions: Rehash with your family how your personal traditions came about. Focus on love and spirit. Pass on the true meaning of the holidays.

Celebrate Christmas for the kids: Be a kid yourself. Stop and look at your kids letters to Santa, write one yourself. If no kids, go to a hospital or a shelter and be around them. They are spiritual and clear.

Remember your pets and the animals: Spend time with your pets, contribute time to a shelter, or just contemplate our coexistence with the animal kingdom.

Celebrate Mother Earth: Acknowledge the seasonal changes honoring the earth and protecting our environment.

Give anonymously: Give to your church or neighbor to help a struggling human being. Give a hug if that's all you can afford.

Have a silent night: Extended times of quiet allow us to become spiritually in tune and contemplate our lives without distraction.

Spend time with the elderly: The wisdom of the past and the view from before is imperative for the youth of families to maintain tradition, custom, and respect.

Cut down on your Christmas card list: Reduce your time. Don't send to people you haven't heard from or dealt with for extended time.

Cut back the number of gifts to kids: Kids get the wrong impression of what Christmas is about. Teach lessons in value. Give less, pay more.

Teach your kids to give: Attempt to take kids away from the self-centered materialistic world we live in.

Less is more: It is the little things that count – gestures of kindness, mints on the pillow, listening and loving.

Create a countdown to Christmas: Make a timeline for each day as to what will be done on each day leading to Christmas.

Stop and smell the flowers: Make it a point to live life's natural splendors. Smell the morning air, watch a sunrise, watch a sunset, look at the stars, and go to the ocean or into the woods. Use your senses of smell, taste, feel, listen and see. Visualize, dream, and be happy.

Get adjusted: See your chiropractor frequently during stressful times to maximize your health and well-being!