

'Tis the Season for EAP Holiday Tips

The holidays are a time of getting together with family and friends, enjoying traditions and recalling warm memories. However, it can also be a stressful time because expectations of happiness may be high, time is short, money is tight and coordinating schedules with family and friends can be difficult. The following are “holiday survival strategies” that may lift your spirits!

Stick to your holiday budget. Many feel pressure to spend more than what they can afford. Avoid the post-holiday blues by determining a budget and sticking to it. Use cash, leave the credit card at home, shop early for bargains or start a savings plan.

Find ways to honor missing family members or friends. Toast them, tell stories and give thanks – it helps relieve the unspoken emotions.

Congratulate yourself. The holiday season is an extremely busy time. Our nation has respect and appreciation for the work that you do as a postal employee **every single day of the year**, but it is extra apparent during the holidays.

Keep holiday plans simple. Get out the calendar, sit down with your family and talk about plans so that every one can have a good time and know what to expect. Play music while you clean or bake. Set limits on chores... clean the big messes after the holidays. And don't forget to ask for help.

Give yourself and others a break. Try to be patient with everyone, including yourself. Focus on the important things and let the rest go.

Celebrate family traditions or create new ones. Family traditions can be fun. They provide us with shared memories and something to look forward to. This year, begin creating your own traditions for happy memories in your future, or revive an old family tradition that has meaning for you and your loved ones.

Take positive steps to manage stress. Pace yourself; take some time every day to relax; talk openly and regularly with at least one trusted person; try to eat well and get adequate sleep and exercise. Spend time with people you enjoy.

Notice when your stress management strategies just aren't working. For example, over-using alcohol, drugs, sleep aids or anti-anxiety medications. Other warning signs could be social isolation, irritability, trouble sleeping or eating, constantly feeling overwhelmed or difficulty making decisions. Be honest with yourself and know when you need to do more to take care of yourself.

Don't wait until you have a big problem! Let your EAP help you with personal and family concerns, stress, workplace issues or substance abuse. We are always here for you, during the holidays or anytime!

Your EAP is here for you.

We're available to talk 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.