

# Solutions

FOR PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE

## Holiday Advice

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### Holiday Shopping Tips

If you've heard the advice, "Never go to the grocery store without a list or when you're hungry," chances are you know why: you're likely to buy more than you need and spend more too. The same advice applies when you're shopping for the holidays. Whether you're shopping at the mall, online, or by phone or mail, The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency, says that a little planning and know-how can help you deliver a holiday season that's on budget and even a little less stressful.



### Holiday Stress Tips



Here are seven simple stress management tips to get you through just about anything - even the holidays! For 25 more specific ideas to beat holiday stress we've attached a great handout. Feel free to copy it or post it.

- Reframe stress as a natural reaction to change which is part of life, in fact, we might not have survived as a species without adapting to various kinds of stress in our environment.
- Keep a soft belly as you go about your day. Occasionally, stop what you're doing, inhale through your nose and exhale completely through gently pursed lips. Imagine your belly as a deep, powerful place. Feel breath coming and going. Repeat 10 times, relaxing more fully with each repetition.
- Tense and relax. Tense legs and feet and relax. Make fists, tighten arms, bring shoulders up to the ears as you inhale. Hold, then release everything with a big sigh. Repeat.
- Stretch: To get oxygen flowing, sit up straight and interlock your fingers behind your head. Inhale as you pull your elbows back, stretching your upper back and chest muscles. Exhale and bring your elbows forward. Repeat.
- Head massage: Take hold of your hair, close to your scalp, and gently tug on it to release tension. Then rub your fingers in small circles over your entire head to stimulate blood flow, which reduces pain and stress.
- Acupressure. Use the thumb and index finger of one hand to squeeze the soft spot between the thumb and index finger of the other. Hold for three counts. Switch sides. Next: With thumb and index finger, gently squeeze each of your fingers all over. Use your thumb to rub each joint in a circular motion. Then hold each finger at its base and pull gently to stretch it, sliding your grip up the finger and off the tip.
- Close your eyes and create a peaceful visualization, or "dreamscape." To start, simply visualize anything that keeps your thoughts away from current tensions. It could be a favorite vacation spot, a fantasy island, that penthouse in New York City -- or something "touchable," like the feel of your favorite silk robe or cozy sweater.

Source: *2young2retire* newsletter,

visit [www.2young2retire.com](http://www.2young2retire.com)



## Grief & The Holidays

For most people, the holidays are a time of joy and celebration with family and friends. But for those who've experienced the loss of a loved one, it can be a lonely and depressing time. Old traditions, cherished holiday songs and favorite recipes can all be painful reminders of a loved one's passing. Grief following any loss can be difficult, but the grief that follows death can be downright devastating, and the holidays frequently accentuate it.

### Holiday Coping Tips

1. Keep comforting traditions and replace those that cause you pain.
2. Grief heals with time and attention. Don't let people rush your grieving process. Take your time and be true to your own feelings.
3. Don't feel guilty about having fun, but remember that your feelings – happy or sad – are OK.
4. Don't avoid expressing your feelings. Talk about them and tell others what's going on inside of you. Eventually you'll stop talking about the death of your loved one and you'll start sharing stories and memories.
5. Make a toast or light a candle in remembrance of your loved one.
6. Share stories of your loved one.

To read more helpful tips, go to:

<http://www.solutions-eap.com/tips/CopingwithGriefduringtheholidays.pdf>

Feel free to copy or post.

## Responsible Holiday Hosting

So you're having a party at your place over the holidays and there maybe one or two guests that occasionally overdo it and you're worried about it even before they've stepped foot in the door. What can you do to make sure that everyone stays safe on your watch?

Preparation is the key so plan for responsible hosting just as you would plan for what food to serve. Better to be planning this ahead of time rather than having a situation that makes everyone uncomfortable and unsafe. The first step is to set the tone right from the start. Model appropriate behavior and let people know that becoming intoxicated is unacceptable.



## Making 2009 Happy, Healthy & Productive

I imagine most of us are ready to let go of 2008 after what has happened with the housing mess and the overall economy! It seems bad news is all around us with the possibility of more to come. We have a choice though, we can let the bad "weather" forecasts overwhelm us and keep us in a dismal stormy mood or we can enter 2009 with a hopeful, positive attitude and focus on what we can control in our own lives to improve ourselves, our families, our finances, our relationships and our work.

A positive attitude is just the start though. It helps to make specific goals about those areas you would like to improve. Here are a few guidelines to help your goals become realities:

**Be Specific**

Clearly defining your objectives will help you measure your progress. Make graphs or some visual way to track your progress daily or weekly.

**Be Realistic**

What is reasonable given your work and home responsibilities? Try stretching a bit though.

**Be Positive**

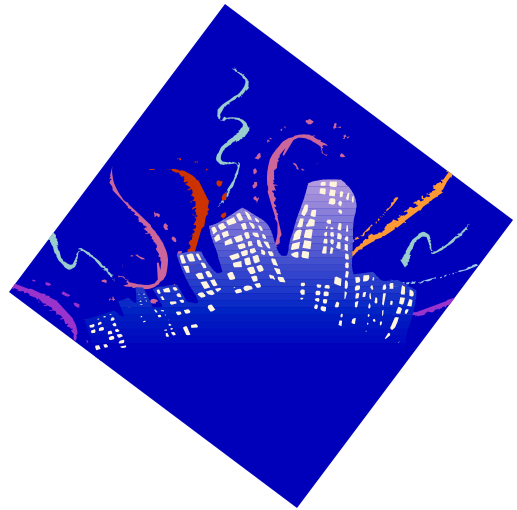
Phrase your goals so they say what you want, not what you don't want: "I will be a non-smoker," instead of "I don't want to smoke anymore."

**Be Visual**

Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and visualize achieving your goal. What you see is what you get.

**Be Patient & Persistent**

It usually takes more time than you think to reach important goals. It's the direction you're going, not whether you get there on time.



Need some ideas for goals for 2009?

Go here: [http://www.solutions-eap.com/tips/Making\\_2009\\_Happy.pdf](http://www.solutions-eap.com/tips/Making_2009_Happy.pdf) for tips to make this year one of your best ever!

Check out all of our holiday tips pages on-line

<http://www.solutions-eap.com/tips/holidaytips2008.htm>

Call Solutions EAP at 1-800-526-3485 for assistance for all of life's challenges.

It's free, confidential and open to family members.