

Feng Shui Guide to Reduce Holiday Stress and increase Joy

Are the holidays a stressful time for you? Do you have too many things to do in a limited amount of time? Are there too many things to buy within a tight budget and too many places to go while trying to maintain your normal schedule? Rest assured there is something you can do to relieve the stress.

Stress can be wrapped in many shapes, sizes and packages during the holiday season. People often celebrate as many as three or four holidays during this time of the year. Each one comes with its own distinct set of stressors that can overshadow your potential for joy.

- The biggest stressor for many is time – having too much to do in a limited amount of time. Shopping, decorating, baking, preparing extra meals, and making travel plans maximize anxiety levels. Adding to that stress is holding a full-time job or caring for family and loved ones.
- For others, it is financial stress. It is very easy to overspend, overconsume and charge it. Today there is a tendency to get everyone the very latest electronic toys, tools and gadgets, which more than taxes the average budget.
- For some, it is the overwhelming fear and anxiety. Fear strikes those who wonder if they will be forgotten or totally alone during the holidays. The thought of being forgotten, alone, unloved and unwanted is a major fear for the elderly – and not so elderly. It affects those who are living far from family and friends or those who are unable to travel.

Feng Shui, the stress-reducing answer

Feng Shui is a lifestyle choice built around the idea of creating balance in your life so you can live a healthy, prosperous and abundant life filled with peace and joy. Follow some of its stress-relieving ideas to help create balance and find more peace and joy in this hectic time of the year.

Control your time. The best way to limit or control stress is to plan ahead. If the holidays are a really big stress issue for you, do as much as you can as early as possible. Plan months ahead not just days and weeks. You only need two simple tools to plan ahead: a pad of paper and a pen or pencil.

Reduce your stress quotient by making “to do” and “to buy” lists. Get into the habit of writing everything you need to accomplish, including exactly what you will be purchasing for gifts – and then stick to your lists. By creating your plan and getting it on paper you will unclutter your thinking, save time and money.

Control Your Spending. Do you over-commit, over-eat and/or over-spend during the holidays. Stop it. This is not a time to be swayed by luring department store ads or to over-use credit cards. Impulse purchases *will not* make your gift more appreciated by the recipient and *will* provide more stress next month when credit card bills arrive. Give yourself the gift of self-control.

Control your circumstances. Don't be alone or forgotten – invite people to join you on the day(s) that are most difficult for you – even if your budget only allows for peanut and jelly sandwiches. Be of service to others; visit a homebound friend or go to a soup kitchen and help serve a meal to those less fortunate. Be social, go to a movie with friends or participate in church, synagogue or community activities. By planning ahead or providing for others you will not be alone and you will experience the joy of sharing.

Getting in control of your life during the holidays will automatically reduce stress. Once you have reduced the stress levels during the holidays and created a plan, you will give yourself a gift: the present of abundance and joy.

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