

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

COPING WITH SEASONAL CHANGES

Taking breaks and staying healthy will help you avoid feeling burned out.

It's not unusual for people to look forward to the change of seasons and the holidays but dread them at the same time. Shopping for gifts, decorating, and hosting and attending social events can be fun but stressful, especially when you already have too many things on your plate and feel pressed for time. Other stress triggers may be financial pressures, family conflicts, and travel.

Taking good care of yourself is the first order of business for getting through the holidays. Perhaps scaling back on shopping, decorating, baking, or holiday gatherings makes sense for you to try this year to lessen stress.



Remember that:

- **Taking breaks and staying healthy will help you avoid feeling burned out.** Make time for regular exercise, healthy eating, adequate sleep, and activities that are enjoyable and relaxing.
- **You can let go of perfection and scale down expectations.** Sometimes we put too much pressure on ourselves. You don't have to have the best decorated house on the street, host the perfect party, or carry on holiday traditions that are too difficult to continue.
- **There are things you can't control.** A family member may get sick, a car might break down, or other things might happen that throw a monkey wrench in your holiday plans. Try to take one day at a time, focus on the positives whenever you can, and remember that what you can control is how you choose to react to people and situations. Try to keep your sense of humor.
- **Maintaining your boundaries is important for your mental and emotional health.** Know your limits. Slow down, simplify, and resist doing too much or over-committing yourself.
- **When the going gets tough, the tough ask for help.** Don't be shy about asking for and accepting help from others.

What really matters during the holidays is your peace of mind and spending time with people you care about. You may need to let go of old traditions, start some new ones, and enjoy the simple things that help you and your loved ones feel comfortable during the holiday season.