

Keeping Christmas Merry!

try not to get defensive if others have different points of view.

3. Take care of yourself!

Whenever stressful events arise, the first things to go are the very basic things that our bodies need to manage stress. For example, we skip meals, grab a donut as we run around and head off to various commitments, stop our exercise regime, and stay up late... and all of these practices throw off our sleeping pattern! The trick is to be good to our bodies! It needs regular healthy meals, proper rest, and exercise to have energy, brain power, and immunity to all the flu bugs going around. Also, breathe! Oxygen is energy. Some good deep breathing exercises are relaxing and help our bodies cope with stress. Finally, stay on your medication regime! Maintaining routine includes taking the vitamins and medications that the doctor has recommended in order to keep our bodies functioning properly.



4. Plan...

Prioritize the things you would like to accomplish, placing the essentials at the top of your list. Then think about the time you have to spare, make a list of things you would like to do, and prioritize those tasks. Factor in your personal time; this is time for you to rest, exercise, or get out with friends and family. Lastly, strike off the things that don't make the priority lists, and say no to things you don't have the time or financial ability to do this year. Stay within your budget of time and money. When you've done these things and stick to your plan, you can feel free to say no without guilt because you are contributing the best you can in a healthy way!

5. Give gifts from the heart.

These are so much more meaningful than gifts from the wallet. So, if the family has decided on a gift-giving procedure that doesn't allow you to give to everyone you want to, or if your budget is tight this year, here are some great ideas that

won't break the family rules:

- ✓ Write a poem
- ✓ Take and share pictures and videos
- ✓ Make something for them: a card, a scrapbook, art that you enjoy creating, etc.
- ✓ If you have internet connections and email, send them an e-card – do a Google search for the free ones

6. Notice if others are becoming irritable or tense.

Instead of reacting defensively, put yourself in their shoes, and think about the ways they may be challenged in their lives. You may want to ask them about how things are going to give them an opportunity to vent about their own stressors. **Encourage and support them in their difficulties.** This can include acknowledging their challenges and efforts and reminding them that you support them. Tell people that you believe in them, recognize their challenges, and do things that help them or reflect your support.

7. Remember to treat yourself over the Christmas season! Take time to rest, relax, and be entertained. Here are some great ideas that will help you get away from the hustle and bustle:

- ✓ Rent or watch Christmas movies
- ✓ Take a quiet night at home to have a bath, read, listen to music, etc.
- ✓ Take a trip to Candy Cane Lane, Hawrelak Park, the Legislative Grounds; Watch or join in on the ice skaters at these wonderfully lit places
- ✓ Play board games with family or friends
- ✓ Treat yourself to mulled cider or eggnog, either at home or at your favorite coffee shop
- ✓ Go cross country skiing
- ✓ Give anonymous gifts, like cookies or squares that you baked
- ✓ Go to a Christmas performance: plays and concerts in the community
- ✓ Attend a candle lit service on Christmas Eve



The **Women's Support Group** at NABIS wishes everyone a wonderful Christmas season! May you all truly enjoy the blessings of family, friends, and other support networks in your lives! We hope to see everyone at the Christmas party on December 13 to celebrate our own community and friendships!