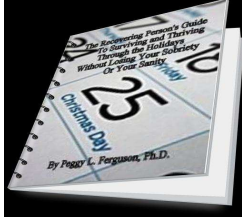


2012, The Holiday Stress Management Refrigerator List: Or How to Reduce Your Holiday Stress with Bullet-point Suggestions

By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.



"The Recovering Person's Guide to Surviving and Thriving Through the Holidays Without Losing Your Sobriety or Your Sanity" Ebook

\$7.95



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If thoughts of The Holidays create a sense of pessimistic apprehension, angst, or even dread, now is the time to develop new Holiday Stress Management techniques that can remove you from the "overwhelmed zone" and assist you in regaining that long lost holiday spirit.

Here are some suggestions for making this Holiday Season less stressful. You hear them each year. You ignore the advice each year. You get

frazzled and stressed out each year. Perhaps with daily visual reminders you will try some of these simple suggestions. Feel free to add your own to the bottom. Post this list to your refrigerator for a handy reminder.

- Keep your expectations realistic and manageable. Identify your old repeated expectations that never quite manifest. Recall how those expectations cause you pain and resentment each year. Allow your expectations to more closely resemble reality.
- Remember that this year is not same holiday as ones remembered from the past. You and the people in your life change daily. Your circumstances change. Life goes on. Develop some new holiday activities and traditions.
- Life is too short to spend a lot of time with people who bring you down. Spend time with people who love you and who support you. They may or may not be your family. Don't wait for them to contact you. Reach out to them.
- Put your health first—not last. Keep disruption of your life to a minimum. Exercise. Get your normal amount of sleep. Take your vitamins. Use your relaxation tapes or techniques. Go to support meetings. Do your daily meditation. Take better care of yourself, not less care. Maintain balance.
- Let go of old "shoulds" in your thinking. Example: No one *should* spend more time, energy, and other resources than they have just because it is The Holidays.
- Develop and proclaim an attitude of gratitude. The Holidays is a really great time to take stock of your blessings. Tell other people what you are grateful for.
- Relinquish control of other people. Be responsible for your own decisions, feelings, and behavior. Let them take care of themselves. They either will or they won't.
- Try to keep as much as possible to your normal eating habits. Don't eat to stuff feelings. Stop eating when you are full. These foods are available to you any time that you want them. Don't act like this is the last time you are ever going to have "holiday foods".
- Don't try to do it all. Let others help. Prioritize and even take some things off your list. Ask others to help, then let them do it without too much "supervision".
- Mind your budget. Don't overspend. People love you because you are you, not because of what you buy them.

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