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Managing Stress During the Holidays: Tips for Caregivers

The holiday season should be a time of joy as we attend parties and family gatherings. But for many of us, it can also be a time of stress and even depression. In addition to the everyday demands of our work, family and caring for aging relatives, there are the demands of the holidays! Many of us are likely to feel sad, frustrated or overwhelmed.

Here are some suggestions that may help you to cope with the pressures of the season:

***Keep expectations manageable.** Try to set realistic goals and prioritize tasks. Try to accept that some tasks may not get done at all!

***Accept what is.** Focus on things you can improve; avoid wasting time and energy on things you cannot control.

***Plan ahead whenever possible.** Being organized can help to reduce stress. For example, try to buy gifts or prepare meals in advance.

***Make adjustments as needed.** Family traditions enrich the holidays

by linking us with the past. But life may have brought changes this year that make these traditions more difficult to maintain. It is fine to scale down or rethink your celebration.

***Take care of yourself.** Get plenty of sleep, eat a proper diet and try to exercise. Remember that excessive drinking and eating may increase feelings of depression.

***Ask for help and accept it when it is offered.** Let others share the responsibility for holiday activities or caregiving, even if you have always “done it all” in the past.

The key is to try to be flexible and to let go of some of your ideas of the perfect holiday. Work on enjoying yourself and your family in the moment.

Happy Holidays from ElderCare Solutions!

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