



Holiday stress affects all of us in different ways. For the ladies in the crowd they want the perfect "Norman Rockwell" Christmas, or most romantic, glittery New Year's Eve. Maybe it's to make the best Thanksgiving Turkey with all the fixings. Like Sarah Evans says "It does not need to be perfect". Being together should be the goal. Not being perfect. ONLY Perfect Being is the Guy upstairs or Mary Poppins.



GIFTS Why is it that we buy so much stuff and add to the chaos that is the kid's rooms? Maybe do a sort & clean out prior to the gifts arriving. Scrub down the items that could be donated. Find a local family that is having a hard time. Many charities don't WANT or TAKE toys. So why are they still being manufactured? We should be giving gently used toys to families that have nothing.



THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING! THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING!

Are you ready?

TURKEY DAY

But before you get all overwhelmed – take a deep breath. What can you do without? Maybe you break up the Thanksgiving meal, you make the turkey and other family members bring the side dishes. Saves time and everyone enjoys the meal.



GREETING CARDS

Cards for Christmas or Hanukkah why not do New Year's or Thanksgiving cards. I find sending Thanksgiving cards says thanks for being in my life. It lets people know you appreciate them. They may even sit down and read your card.

SELF CARE FOR EVERYONE

- Get to bed early-when it permits, nap if you can to catch up on sleep.
- Overload on fruit and veggies. Limit the caffeine so you can sleep. Get out fresh air helps with sleep.
- Be nice to store clerks/managers (believe me they don't want to work Black Friday either), delivery drivers, bank tellers and endless volunteers.
- SMILE-Random acts of kindness.
- Ask for help if you need it. You would be surprised who will step up.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD BE AWARE OF

- Loss of appetite and difficulty sleeping over a period of weeks are signs of extreme stress worth discussing with your pediatrician
- When your child seems to be unraveling-balking at attending family celebrations for instance, acknowledge their feelings rather than insisting they act happy: "I know you don't like going to Aunt Tilly's but it's what we do as a family." Suggest she bring a book to read or give her permission to disappear to the computer room. Bring toys and activities that will occupy a younger child.
- Similarly, don't come down too hard on a child who disappears to her room in midst of activity. They may over-stimulated and need some time alone, where it's quiet
- Help plan ways to celebrate the holidays that are relevant to your child and not just you. A school-age child may want a party just for her friends. A preschooler may do better to make presents rather than try to make choices in a crowded store.

Written by Barbara F. Meltz, *The Boston Globe* 12/8/94. Article had lots of helpful advice. For copy of it contact me.