TOP 10 TIPS FOR HOLIDAY STRESS

If the thought of upcoming holidays fills you with dread, you're not alone. Use these tips to stay festive this season.

1. **SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS**
   Things aren’t going to go perfectly and that’s okay. You can’t control every outcome, but you can prepare yourself mentally by visualizing your calm, positive response to negative events.

2. **AVOID THE SHOTGUN APPROACH**
   You’ll accomplish more by tackling one thing at a time and giving it your full attention.

3. **PAY AS YOU GO**
   Charging your purchases may delay your bills, but knowing they’re waiting for you in January increases stress.

4. **CUT YOUR COSTS**
   Give inexpensive but thoughtful gifts like home-baked goods or hand-made photo albums. Bundling several small items around a theme provides a low cost, personal touch.

5. **TAKE SOME TIME OFF**
   Don’t cram all errands and shopping trips into the precious little time you have outside of work hours. Avoiding the weekend crowds will allow you to get more done.

6. **ASK FOR HELP**
   If you’re playing host, assign chores and duties to your spouse and/or children.

7. **CHEER LOVES COMPANY**
   Combine household holiday prep with socializing. Ask some friends over for a baking and gift-wrapping party.

8. **HELP SOMEONE WHO NEEDS YOU**
   Nothing melts away personal troubles like helping someone else overcome theirs.

9. **PASS DOWN WISDOM AND TRADITION**
   Instead of mourning the passing of better times, keep those memories alive by sharing them with the next generation.

10. **TAKE A TIME OUT**
    Indulge in things you stopped doing because you “just don’t have time” for them anymore. Go for a long lunch, see that movie you’ve been dying to watch, or have a night out with friends.