

Stress Management during the Holidays



The National Alliance on Mental Illness noted that **64%** of individuals living with a mental illness felt that their conditions worsened around the holidays.

There are a variety of reasons why your days may **NOT** be merry and bright around the holiday season. It can be the jam-packed social calendar, deadlines at work, the loss of a loved one, sunless winter days, or all of the above.

Learn to say **NO**.

Taking on more activities can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity. Try to remove something else from your agenda to make up for the lost time.

According to the American Psychological Association, **41%** of people surveyed said their stress increased during the holiday season, which can lead to physical illness, depression, anxiety, and alcohol/substance misuse. The reasons given: lack of time, financial pressure, gift-giving, and family gatherings.



What You Can Do About It?

- Recognize that you don't need to force yourself to be happy and remember that you are not alone in feeling this way.
- If possible, surround yourself with people who feel similarly; celebrate your traditions or create new ones.



Alcohol Can Be a Risky Guest at Holiday Parties



People who are hosting holiday parties can take steps to ensure their guests stay safe and avoid alcohol-related problems. Some tips:

- ❑ Don't pressure anyone to drink.
- ❑ Offer a variety of **Non-alcoholic Beverages** and serve food.
- ❑ Stop serving alcohol at least one hour before the party ends.
- ❑ Don't let guests who are drunk continue drinking.
- ❑ Don't allow guests to drive if they have had too much to drink.
Remember: Coffee or a **cold** shower won't sober someone up. It takes time to get alcohol out of the blood.
- ❑ People with drinking problems should **Make a Plan** for how they are going to manage being around alcohol during the holidays.
- ❑ Party-goers don't have to bring alcohol as a gift for their host, experts noted. **Teas**, **Hot Chocolate**, **Cider** and **Coffee** are great non-alcoholic alternatives.



Many people who attend seasonal parties seldom drink alcohol, making them more vulnerable to its effects.

Drinking in moderation can help prevent alcohol-related injuries and health issues. Appoint a designated driver who will stay sober and ensure partygoers get home safely.