



## *Stress and the Holidays: Tips for Coping*

Stress can ruin your holidays and hurt your health. When stress is at its peak, it's hard to stop and regroup. Try to prevent stress that accompanies the holidays with some of these practical tips.

*You may even end up enjoying the holidays more than you thought you would.*

1. **Acknowledge your feelings.** If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. It's ok to take time to cry or express your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.
2. **Reach out.** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship. Volunteering your time to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.
3. **Stick to a budget.** Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts.
4. **Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. That'll help prevent last-minute scrambling to buy forgotten ingredients. Make sure to line up help for the party prep and cleanup.
5. **Don't abandon healthy habits.** Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt.
6. **Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.
7. **Set aside differences.** Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion. Be understanding if others get upset or distressed when something goes awry. Chances are they're feeling the effects of holiday stress too.
8. **Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to and be open to creating new ones. For example, if your adult children can't come to your house, find new ways to celebrate together, such as sharing pictures, emails or videos.

*With planning, you can find peace and joy during the holidays.*

*Provided by Mayo Clinic Staff*

## ***Community Events***

**Eau Claire-area Game Developers** Playtest each other's digital and analog games while discussing game design and development. Open to everyone regardless of background or experience. **7:30-10pm Mon. Nov. 12** D20 Gaming LLC 2158 East Ridge Center, Cost: FREE, Age: All Ages

**Kids Circus Party** Your child will learn the basics of aerial silks, lyra hoop, acro, hooping. Moonrise Aerials Studio 800 Wisconsin Street; Banbury Place Building 13, Room 112, Cost: \$30 **6:40-7:40pm Fri. Nov. 16** Age: Ages 4-13

**Holiday Crafting for Kids** Children will make ornaments and decorations using natural/recycled items. Snack included. Wise Nature Center, Beaver Creek Reserve S1 Cty Rd. K, Fall Creek Cost: Friends Child \$6, Nonmember Child \$8 **10am-noon Sat. Nov. 17**, Age: Age 5+

**Frozen Party with Sundae Bar** You can meet & greet with Elsa & Olaf in person and make your own frozen sundae. Admission includes rentals, playground, and sundae. Limited to the first 75 kids. Reservations recommended. Tickets can be purchased online. High Roller-Skating Center 3120 Melby St, Cost: \$12 for kids, **4:30-6:30pm Sun. Nov. 18**

**5th Annual Let It Glow & Clearwater Winter Parade** The Let it Glow tree lighting ceremony begins in Phoenix Parks at 5:30pm. Fireworks on the Grand Avenue bridge begin at 6:30pm, followed by the parade on West Grand Avenue and First Avenue. Cost: FREE Age: All Ages **5:30-7:30pm Fri. Nov. 30**

**Tinsel and Tidings** Family Fun Event with Santa present, cookie decorating, live music, as well as wonderfully decorated Christmas Trees from local businesses raffled off at the end of this event. Metropolis Resort 5150 Fairview Drive, Eau Claire Cost: Admission is a toy donation for child age 0 to 18 Age: All Ages **11am-7pm Sat. Dec. 1**

**Santa Day at the Labor Temple** Santa Claus is coming to the Labor Temple. Stop by for free lunch and photo with Santa Claus. Serving from 11:30-1:30: hot dogs, brats, beans, kraut, fruit, hot cocoa. All families welcomed. Labor Temple Lounge 2233 Birch St # 6, Eau Claire Cost: FREE **11:30am-1:30pm Sat. Dec. 1** Age: All Ages

**17th Annual Christmastime in the City Celebration** Downtown's signature Holiday event, featuring a visit with Santa, horse-drawn wagon rides, hot cocoa for all and cookies for all kids, and the lighting of Downtown's Christmas Tree. Haymarket Plaza 128 Graham Ave Cost: All activities FREE **1-6pm Sat. Dec. 1**

**Holiday Glow Tree Lighting in River Prairie Park** There will be holiday music, horse drawn wagon rides, hot cocoa and cookie decorating. Approximately 5:45pm. River Prairie Center 1445 Front Porch Place, Altoona Cost: FREE **5:30-6:30pm Sat. Dec. 1** Age: All Ages

**LEGO Club** Join fellow LEGO fans each month for free building and challenge yourself to a monthly themed build. No registration needed. A family drop-in program. LE Phillips Memorial Public Library - Youth Services Program Room 400 Eau Claire St., Eau Claire Cost: FREE **1:30-3pm Sun. Dec. 2** Age: All Ages

**Claymation Classics: Frosty the Snowman** Bring your family to enjoy these holiday Claymation classics on the big screen in the Volume One Gallery/theater inside The Local Store. 205 N. Dewey St., Eau Claire Cost: FREE **2pm Sun. Dec. 2** Age: All ages

**3rd Annual Pizza Fest** Includes all-you-can-eat pizza, unlimited trips to the Bitty Beverage Bar, face painting, balloon animals, and free play. Games, special activities, Children's Museum of Eau Claire 220 S. Barstow St., Eau Claire Cost: Price TBA **6-8pm Fri. Dec. 7** Age: All Ages

**Royal Credit Union New Year's Event** Live DJ entertainment, games, prizes, inflatables, limo rides, face painting, and a HUGE balloon drop at 8:30pm. YMCA Sports Center 3456 Craig Road, Cost: \$5 (cash only) **5-9pm Sun. Dec. 30**

**Annual CMEC Noon Year's Eve Celebration** Children's Museum of Eau Claire 220 S. Barstow St., Eau Claire Cost: FREE with admission Age: All Ages **10am-noon Mon. Dec. 31**

**Rock'N New Year's Family Skate** Hobbs Ice Arena 915 Menomonie St., Eau Claire Cost: \$4/person includes skate rental Age: All Ages **6-9pm Mon. Dec. 31**