

Stress Management During the Holiday Season



The holiday season is a time for joy and togetherness, but it can also bring stress and anxiety. Many factors can contribute to the holiday blues, including financial pressures, unrealistic expectations, travel, crowds, hosting dinners, family tensions, and grief over the loss of loved ones. Take a moment to reflect on these challenges and explore ways to manage them effectively.

Seek Balance with the Medicine Wheel:



The Medicine Wheel is a sacred symbol used by many Indigenous cultures, representing the interconnectedness of all aspects of life and the universe. This circular symbol is typically divided into four quadrants, each associated with different colors, directions, seasons, and elements - but may vary across Tribal Nations.

When stress from the holidays or other responsibilities feels overwhelming, take a moment to assess where you stand in each area and consider adjustments to bring them into balance.

Holistic Balance: By reflecting on each quadrant of the wheel, individuals can assess and balance different aspects of their lives, including physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health.

Cyclical Perspective: The circular nature of the wheel reminds us that life moves in cycles, helping to reduce stress by encouraging acceptance of life's natural ebbs and flows.

Connection to Nature: Contemplating the wheel's representation of natural elements and seasons can foster a sense of grounding and connection to the earth, which can be calming.

Mindfulness Practice: Using the Medicine Wheel as a focus for meditation or reflection can promote mindfulness, reducing stress and anxiety.

Personal Growth: The wheel can serve as a guide for self-improvement and personal development, helping individuals identify areas of their lives that need attention.

By incorporating the teachings of the Medicine Wheel into daily life, individuals can gain perspective, find balance, and develop strategies for managing stress in a culturally meaningful way.

Tips for a Stress-Free Holiday Season

Plan Ahead: Anticipate stressful situations and develop strategies to respond in a healthy way. Whether it's budgeting for gifts or scheduling downtime, planning can help ease the holiday rush.

Set Realistic Expectations: Let go of the idea that everything must be perfect. Embrace the imperfections and cherish the moments that truly matter.

Simplify Your Schedule: Prioritize the events and tasks that bring you joy. By eliminating unnecessary activities, you create more time to enjoy with loved ones.

Limit Social Media Use: Avoid comparing your holiday experience to others online. Focus on creating meaningful memories rather than striving for perfection.

Stay Active: Exercise is a powerful stress reliever. Even a short walk can help clear your mind and boost your mood.

Self-Care is Key: Prioritize healthy meals, adequate sleep, and limit tobacco and alcohol use. Taking care of yourself is essential during this busy time.

Seek Support When Needed: If you find yourself overwhelmed by anxiety or depression, reach out to someone you trust for support. Remember, you are not alone.



For confidential support from anywhere in the U.S., Relatives can reach out to:
StrongHearts Native Helpline
1-844-7NATIVE (1-844-762-8483)

For Relatives living in Nebraska

All Nations Crisis Textline

Text "Support" to 33464 to chat with an All Nations team member. We are here seven days a week from 8am-Midnight



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Sources:

<https://woc.aises.org/content/finding-work-life-balance-and-managing-stress-through-native-traditions> <https://www.compasshealth.org/national-stress-free-holiday-month/>

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