

# FINDING YOUR Holiday Spirit THROUGH SELF-CARE

Ellen Delap

## THE HOLIDAY SEASON

is filled to the brim with activities and time together. There's lots of excitement, not to mention lots of organizing and things to do. Your planning often is about taking care of others and insuring everyone's happiness. This year we need to practice packing some extra self-care. Check out these ideas to add self-care.

### Schedule time for self-care

It is easy to think, with so much extra to do, *When do I have time for self-care?* Self-care is more important during busy times because it is the fuel that keeps you going. Create self-care routines at the same time daily. These priorities can be at the beginning of the day to give you a strong start to each day or at the end of the day to ensure your rest.

### Keep your gratitude practice going strong

Appreciating the blessings in our life remind us of all that is good and positive. Whether it is writing a text to a friend, writing in your journal or a note to yourself, keep your practice intact during the holiday season.

### Acknowledge emotions

During the holidays we experience a range of emotions. Whether happy, sad, overwhelmed, or frenzied, it is good

to name emotions. We can acknowledge what we are experiencing and process this. Give yourself time to pause. Check in with your feelings, acknowledge and sort through the reasons behind these. Manage your expectations and keep these in line with what you can physically and emotionally manage.

### Keep a list of self-care options

When we start down a negative path, we want to have options to make a change. Make your own list of relaxation activities. This can include taking a walk to see holiday lights, sitting down with a hot cup of cocoa, putting on fuzzy slippers for the rest of the day, or any number of soothing activities.



## Well-being first

We all know that our physical well-being is critical. Be sure you keep your health routines, like sleep and diet, as much as you can. While there are times for a late night and special treats, keeping to your regular bedtime and meals with protein give you the energy and emotional stability you need.



**N**ow that extra self-care is also in season, here are some common holiday problems and solutions to help guide you.

### **Problem:**

*There are so many events that happen throughout the month. I find I am double-*

*booking and missing programs I love.*

### **Solution:**

*Establish a command center in your kitchen during the holidays. Use a planner for you and your family's holiday activities. Set up a specific spot for tickets and invitations.*

There are so many options for activities and events during the holidays. Decide on what is most important at a family meeting and write this on the family calendar. Designate a box, basket, or magnetic dry erase board to hold holiday invitations and tickets as soon as they arrive. Set up your smart phone apps to keep digital tickets on your phone to use when you attend the event.

### **Problem:**

*The holiday dinner is at my house. How will I get it all prepared and ready to eat?*

### **Solution:**

*Get a little or a lot of help with semi-home-made and catered food.*

Meal prepping and planning may not be your strong suit. Get help from family and friends for a potluck holiday meal. Check out the to-go foods offered by local eateries for the main proteins in your meal and prepare only the side dishes. Use fancy paper plates so there is less to clean up and more time with family.

### **Problem:**

*I can never find the perfect gift for my family and friends.*

### **Solution:**

*Find gifts and gift cards that share experiences.*

Spending time together is the best gift of all. This year find gift experiences that you and your family will enjoy. Gift cards give your family and friends the opportunity to choose their own special item. This one-size-fits-all approach helps you give a gift with thought and streamline your shopping.

Many families enjoy sharing home-made holiday treats. If this is what you love to do, invite family and friends over to make a batch of fudge or holiday cookies. You enjoy the time together and they take home a treat.

### **Problem:**

*My holidays are so jam-packed, I just don't feel the holiday spirit.*

### **Solution:**

*Set aside time for self-care and the one thing that brings you joy this holiday.*

With all the things to do and the rush of the season, we feel overwhelmed, overstimulated, and underenergized. Write your self-care on your calendar to be sure you are making yourself a priority at this time of year. Whatever your joy in the season, be sure you have that on your calendar.

**WHILE THERE ARE MANY MORE CHALLENGES** with planning, executing, and completing, remember that you can find solutions of all sorts throughout the holiday season that can help you experience the joy of the season. **A**



For over twenty years, Ellen Delap, a certified professional organizer and the owner of **Professional-Organizer.com**, has worked one on one with clients, streamlining their environment, creating effective strategies for an organized lifestyle. She specializes in working with individuals with ADHD, helping them reach their organizing and productivity goals. Delap has been featured on the Smead podcast, in articles with the Houston Chronicle, New York Times, and Associated Press, and as a speaker with the ADDA-Southern Region conferences. She is past president of the National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals (NAPPO) and is based in Houston, Texas.

### **ADDITIONAL READING**

Ellen Delap, "Healthy ADHD Habits and Gratitude Practices" <https://professional-organizer.com/WordPress/tag/add-this-gratitude-practice-for-your-wellbeing-with-adhd/>

Ellen Delap, "How a Pause Can Help" <https://professional-organizer.com/WordPress/how-a-pause-can-help/>