Magazines, displays, catalogs, decorations, advertisements, and books all offer endless tips for the most perfect, peaceful, joyous holiday ever. The pressure to create the ideal holiday can be incredible, often leading to anxiety, stress and eventual burnout. But taking a few bold steps can make a significant difference in truly enjoying a meaningful season.

**Decide What is Truly Important**

No one can do everything during the holidays. There will always be one more cookie recipe to try, one more room to decorate, one more gift to buy, and one more event to attend. To avoid burnout, make a list of what is truly important and stick to it. List everything that normally happens during the season as well as the important things that never seem to happen because they get crowded out. Then cross off every activity, event or commitment that is truly not important. Be ruthless about what is valuable.

**Know Your Optimal Mode of Operation**

One key to avoiding burnout is deciding if you are an early or late holiday person. In other words, is it less stressful to get everything done early or does starting too early cause you to continue at a frenzied pitch until midnight the night before because you can’t stop? Determine if you should shop early or wait, if you should bake ahead or wait until the week of, etc. Know what works best for you.

**Write Everything Down in One Place**

Trying to mentally juggle dozens of details is a sure-fire recipe for major stress. Write everything holiday-related in a notebook. Make lists for cards, foods, menus, gifts, parties, etc. If you have a brilliant idea, write it down immediately. If you find a recipe you want to try, make a photocopy and tape it in the notebook. Keep everything written down in one place.

**Avoid People Who Ruin the Holiday**

One of the biggest sources of stress during the holidays can be other people. If there are people who consistently ruin the holidays, don’t spend time with them. Yes, it may create friction with other people who will not agree with that choice. But if spending time with certain family members, friends, neighbors or coworkers literally ruins the holiday, find a way to get out of it if at all possible.

**Contact ENCOMPASS for more tips on making the most of your holiday season!!!**

800-788-8630

www.encompass.us.com

* http://self-awareness.suite101.com