



IN SIGHT for Oregon Lawyers

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

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TIPS FOR HAVING A HAPPY HOLIDAY

The holiday season has arrived. Are you facing it with glee or dread? If it's the latter, try a few of the following suggestions:

Keep It Simple. Most people who get overwhelmed by the holidays are those who try to do it all. Give yourself permission to say "no," and you'll find that you get greater enjoyment from attending fewer events, sending fewer gifts and greetings, and planning simpler celebrations.

Take Good Care of Yourself. The holiday season coincides with cold and flu season, so make self-care a priority, particularly when the ordinary stress of life seems to be turned up a notch. Get enough sleep and remember to eat regular meals, rather than starving to make up for the prior day's indulgence. Maintain reasonable expectations. While it may be unrealistic to keep (or start!) a regular workout schedule, try to fit in a little exercise every day. Take a quick walk around the block to change your mood and spark your energy.

Make a Plan. If you find family gatherings, large parties, or gift-giving stressful, yet can't eliminate them from your schedule, form a plan instead of letting the event dictate your response. Set a time limit for visits with trying family members. Bring along a video or a game to provide an opportunity for distraction or entertainment. Set a budget in advance for holiday shopping, and shop the Internet and catalogs to avoid impulse buying and crowded shopping areas.

Reach Out. For many people, the holiday season evokes feelings of sadness or loneliness. Take the time for meaningful contact with others, particularly if you're feeling blue. Call a friend, near or far. Say hello to your neighbor or office mate. Volunteer to bring a meal to a homebound person or buy toys for children who might not get any. For those who are grieving or depressed, remember that support is only a phone call away. An OAAP attorney counselor is available 24 hours a day. Don't isolate.

Find Meaning. If the holiday season seems joyless, look for meaning beyond the bustle and noise. Take a walk in the park, or enjoy a starlit night. Try reviving a tradition that you fondly remember from childhood, or explore the traditions of another culture. Start a new tradition – many charitable organizations provide opportunities for giving to those less fortunate. For those in 12-step programs, remember to attend meetings at home or while traveling. Share the gift of your recovery with others who might be struggling, or be renewed by the experience, strength, and hope of others.

The key to finding joy rather than exhaustion during the holiday season is to seek balance in all things, whether it's celebrating, planning, traveling, or giving. The OAAP attorney counselors are available to help, whether you need a referral for recovery meetings out of town, are feeling stressed and overwhelmed, or have questions about how to get through the holiday season healthfully and happily. Call us at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-OAAP (6227); visit our Web site at www.oaap.org; or e-mail us: Meloney Crawford Chadwick

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