**Tip of the Month from Your Health & Wellness Committee**

**Stress Management During the Holidays**

The Holidays are here. Are you ready? Don’t let Holiday Stress get the best of you. Here are some helpful tips for keeping your cool this season.

**Self**-**Care**: This is a busy time of year for family, friends and socializing. If you don’t take care of yourself, you won’t enjoy it.

* Allow time for yourself. Being around people can be draining. Find your personal sense of balance.
* Relaxation is important on a daily basis. Give your mind and body time to recharge.
* Have Fun. Tis the season to be jolly. Make sure you get to enjoy it.

**Managing** **Expectations**: Do you feel pulled in too many directions? Here are some ideas on how to keep from getting overwhelmed.

* Look at your schedule and plan ahead. Do you really have time to send out Holiday Cards this year, put lights up, host a party, etc.?
* How many Holiday Parties do you HAVE TO attend? Prioritize what’s most important to you and still allows time for Self-Care and balance.
* Stay within your budget—you can’t please everyone. Remember, it’s the thought that counts.
* It doesn’t have to be a Hallmark Holiday. Make it what you want.
* Enjoy the moment. Be in the here and now. Today is a memory in the making.

**Family**: Holidays are a time for family, but it doesn’t have to be a time for stress.

* Those who can’t spend time with family can create a family of their own, i.e. time with friends or friends’ families, starting your own holiday tradition or volunteering to help others in need.
* Sometimes spending time with family can be stressful. Have a Plan B ready if things don’t work out well.
* Time with family can be time-limited. You don’t have to let time with family take up your entire holiday vacation.

*Contributed by Chandra Chaikin, MS, LMFT*