

## Managing End of Year and Holiday Stress

While we look forward to gathering with loved ones and celebrating traditions, the pressure to create the "perfect" holiday can take a toll on our, and our loved one's mental well-being.

From navigating family dynamics to the financial burden of gift-giving, the pressure to have a "perfect" holiday can take a toll on mental health. Learn about a few ways to promote end-of-year wellness:

1. **Have realistic expectations:** No holiday season is perfect. Take the pressure off and try celebrating in ways that bring you closer to what matters most, and avoid comparing your reality to ideals.
2. **Make a budget:** Before the holidays arrive, set limits on expenses related to gift-giving and travel to reduce financial strain.
3. **Eat and drink in moderation:** Cook nourishing meals, and maintain your typical diet. Avoid using substances to manage stress, and consider whether to attend events where there will be pressure to drink alcohol.
4. **Set boundaries:** Create alone time for yourself, or reserve time for activities you enjoy, especially if family events add to anxiety. Try opting out of obligations that bring more negative than positive feelings.
5. **Seek support:** Stress associated with the holidays is usually short-lived. However, reach out to a mental health professional if these feelings get overwhelming.

The expectation that the year should end on a cheerful note can make the holiday blues feel even worse. A Healthline survey found that money was the top cause of stress during the holidays, but it's not the only factor. Here's a look at the main causes of holiday stress that respondents identified in the survey.

- 47% - Finances
- 16% - Health eating and exercise
- 15% - Choosing the "right" gift
- 12% - Scheduling
- 10% - Other

As the holiday season unfolds, remember that it's okay to not be perfect. Prioritize self-care, set realistic expectations, and seek support when needed.

*Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers vary from country-to-country and individual benefits packages. Please read the EAP eligibility statements noted within the materials under your country on [UndertheHat.com](https://www.UndertheHat.com).*

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