



Volume 11, Number 11

The Family Friend

A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

November, 2009

The Holidays Are Here Again!

Editor's Note: The days from late November through the end of the year are normally known as the "holiday season." They are a source of joy to many people, but they are also a source of stress (and distress) for many people due to unrealistic expectations (either by them or those around them).

In past issues of *The Family Friend* we have tried to provide articles with suggestions to help relieve stress during the holiday season. This year, we are including several lists which do not share quite the same information, but are still related and important. They were originally published in a community resource booklet by the Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Mental Health Board and Community Affairs Department. The title of the booklet is "Coping With the Holidays." The news booklet can be found in pdf form at: <http://www.lcmhb.org/coping-with-the-holidays.pdf>

Ten Ways to "Take Charge" During the Holidays

1. Know your needs and ask people to help you meet them.
2. Don't expect more from others than you are willing to give yourself.
3. Have a plan of action to help you enjoy the holidays. (Who, How, What, When)
4. Think positively about yourself, your family, your friends, and your situation.
5. Take advantage of things available that do not cost money. (concerts, displays, etc.)
6. Don't compare yourself to others.
7. Plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time to coordinate activities.
8. Count your blessings-see the cup as half full, rather than half empty.
9. Learn to live more with less.
10. Pat yourself on the back for getting through another holiday.

Money Saving Tips

1. Stop or limit your use of credit cards. It's hard to know how much you have spent until the credit card bills start to arrive.
2. Take advantage of sales and comparison shopping. You could easily save more than 50% on some purchases. If the item you want isn't on sale, ask if it will be going on sale in the near future.
3. Consider a part-time job, especially in stores that offer employee discounts.
4. Gift wrapping can be expensive. Plan ahead and buy next year's paper after the holidays this year for substantial savings.
5. Start in January to save all your change at the end of the day in a jar. Don't use any of it until the holidays.
6. Shop at factory outlet stores or buying clubs that often offer lower prices.
7. Make sure you record all checks, so that none of them are returned for insufficient funds.
8. Save on postage by sending cards only to those you

won't see during the holidays.

9. Watch for special sales later in the season. When holiday spending is sluggish, stores often discount merchandise.

Unique Holiday Gifts/Activities

1. Provide for time with family members and other loved ones. Read stories or poetry together, share fondest holiday memoirs, bake cookies, etc.
2. Share family history with your children and/or grandchildren, or put together an album of old photographs. These make great gifts and are a good way to pass on family customs and traditions.
3. Give tapes of children singing to grandparents, and have grandparents make tapes of stories of the good old days for families to share.
4. Have family members make a "personal gift bag." Everyone decorates a paper bag. Then, each person writes something he/she appreciates or especially likes about every other family member on a piece of paper. Each person also writes down what they will "give" every other person—a gift that cannot be bought and places it in the appropriate bag. For example, a child might write, "Dad, I really

appreciate the fact that you take time to help me with the computer. My gift to you will be 15 minutes to relax when you get home."

5. Share some of your favorite recipes. Write them on pretty cards and give them as gifts, or have a cookie exchange with your friends and/or neighbors.
6. Give family heirlooms as gifts. Make sure the gift will be treasured, but at the same time, be sure you are willing to give up all rights of ownership.

A Low-Fat Holiday

Helpful Hints:

1. Don't skip meals to save on calories. You'll be so hungry that you'll overeat.
2. Snack on low fat food (fruit and vegetables) before attending parties to avoid overeating rich, fattening foods.
3. Don't keep leftovers around. Send them home in holiday containers.
4. Don't deny yourself all desserts and foods. Allow yourself a small sampling of a few special treats, or you'll feel deprived and end up overeating.
5. When eating out, do what you can to cut fat. Avoid sauces, gravies, cheese, mayonnaise, butter and margarine, or ask for them on the side. Choose

The Family Friend

Published Monthly by
Calvert City church of Christ

baked, grilled, roasted, steamed, broiled or poached foods instead of fried.

6. Try to eat fruit and vegetables as much as possible (at least one at each meal) to offset desserts and meat/cheese finger food.
7. Eat slowly whenever you can and you will eat less.
8. Don't start a diet around the holidays. You'll feel guilty when you can't stick with it and end up eating more.
9. Drink lots of water.
10. Offset tiring shopping and holiday stress with regular exercise and time to relax. If you feel yourself becoming stressed, take time to recharge.
11. When preparing foods for holiday gatherings, use low-fat recipes. They're just as good, nice to look at, and your guests will appreciate it, too.

