

# How to Enjoy the Holidays Without Losing Sleep, Going Broke and Caving in to the Expectations of Family



## ***THE HOLIDAY SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS***



**THE CAREGIVER'S  
LIGHTHOUSE**  
COMMUNITY - COMFORT - UNDERSTANDING

[www.thecaregiverslighthouse.com](http://www.thecaregiverslighthouse.com)

# **“How to Have a Happy Holiday Without a Family Feud’**

## ***5 Simple Steps to Keep Peace at the Holiday Dinner Table Without***



### **Build Your Support Team**

- ◆ Have someone spend time with the person you are caring for so you get a break and/or spend time with people who are important to you.
- ◆ Have a trusted family member or friend keep an eye out on you so they can help you get out of situations that are bringing you down.
- ◆ Arrange in advance with the person who is watching out for you to use a “code word” they can use to alert you of when it’s time to get out of the situation you are in.



### **Spend Time With Whom You Really Want To**

- ◆ Make a list of everyone you will be spending time with during the holidays.
- ◆ Rate them on a scale of 1 – 5 with 1 meaning you never feel good when you are around them, and 5 meaning they can make you laugh regardless of how bad a day you have had.
- ◆ Spend most of your time with people who you rated 3 and up.



### **Limit Your Time With People Who Drag You Down**

*Using the list of people and ratings you already did, you can stay from those people who drive you crazy (those you rated less than 3):*

- ◆ When they want to talk with you, tell them you are in the middle of something and you’ll get back to them.
- ◆ When you see them in the room, avoid that part of the room as much as possible.
- ◆ If you must talk with them, keep smiling and saying “uh-huh.” Don’t engage in a conversation that makes you feel uncomfortable or bad.



### **Have a Graceful Response Ready**

- ◆ Gratitude: “Thank you for thinking of me, what would be helpful for me is \_\_\_\_\_.” Or “Thank you for your perspective and information.”
- ◆ Appreciation: “I appreciate that you care about us so much to share that with me.”
- ◆ Understanding: “It’s great that idea worked for you (or friend/family). I’ll check it out.”



### **Have An Escape Plan**

- ◆ Sometimes the only answer is to get out of the situation and go home. Have a conversation with your loved one in advance so both of you know when you’ve had enough and it’s time to go.
- ◆ Use a code word or situation: For example, you might say, “We have to go now. It’s time for that special treatment” or “I think I left the iron on”.
- ◆ Set a timer on your smart phone as a reminder to check in with the person you are caring for to see how they are doing, and if they are ready to leave.

# **“How to Have a Happy Holiday Without a Family Feud” Personal Pocket Planner**

## **Build Your Support Team of Friends and Family**

**Who can spend time with the person you are caring for:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Text: \_\_\_\_\_

**Who will keep an eye on you?**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Text: \_\_\_\_\_

**Code Word:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Who Do You Spend Time With?**

**(Rate on scale of 1- 5. 1 = they bring you down 5= you feel great)**

**(Highlight any ratings of 3 or higher)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_

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# **“How to Have a Happy Holiday Without a Family Feud” Personal Pocket Planner**

## **My Graceful Responses**

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## **My Escape Plan**

\_\_\_ Have conversation about how you will communicate when it's time to leave.

\_\_\_ Code word or phrase we will use: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_ Timer set on smart phone to use to check in with each other.

## **Other important information:**

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# How to Have a Happy Holiday Without Losing Sleep

One way to get more sleep is to do less and save time. There are many ways you can do this and the list below will save you time and overcome some of the overwhelm that comes with the holiday season.

## Be Truthful About Your Time

Everyone has the same amount of time each week - 168 hours.

- Take a 10 -15 minutes to write down everything you normally do in a week, and then add in all the extras you do in the holiday season. Remember to add in personal care (shower, brushing teeth, etc), cooking, laundry, sleep, time to travel to appointments, telephone calls for appointments and talking with family, etc.
- Beside each activity, write down how long it takes you to do each one and total all the hours.
- Subtract the total hours of your activities/responsibilities from 168 (the total hours available in the week.)
- Circle 3 - 5 things that someone else could do for you.

## Shop Online

Shopping online can save you a lot of time compared to travelling and going from store to store. Amazon is a common online store. Most major department stores and box stores have online order available.

## Let Others Help

Let family and friends help with shopping, gift wrapping, and especially with the family holiday meal. Have someone host the meal or have everyone bring something so you don't have to do any preparation.

## One Family Meal

Insist that you will only attend one big family meal, and do your best to have as many people as possible to make it to that meal.

## Accept Assistance for Other Things

You might like to get out of the house and do your own shopping. During the holiday season, ask for help with household chores, extra meal prep, visiting the person you are caring for, going to the medical appointments or anything else you'd like to delegate so you can go out and enjoy the holiday season for yourself.

# How to Have a Happy Holiday Without Losing Sleep

## Personal Planner

### The Time Formula

Number of hours available in a week. 168 (a)

Number of hours for all my activities in a week \_\_\_\_\_ (b)  
(include, sleep meal prep, personal hygiene,  
telephone calls, booking appointments, eating,  
laundry, yard work etc.)

Subtract (b) from (a) to get your "free time available: \_\_\_\_\_))

### Online Shopping Options

www.amazon.com  
www.amazon.ca

Check major department stores and box stores:

Hudson's Bay  
Sears  
Toys R Us  
Visions  
Best Buy  
Target  
Walmart

### Who Can Help - and With What?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Help With: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Help With: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Help With: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Help With: \_\_\_\_\_

# How to Have a Happy Holiday Without Going Broke

## Have a “no presents” Christmas

Have a chat with your family and friends and let them know you won't be giving presents this year, and that you are A-OK with not receiving any.

## Set a Smaller Budget

Set a smaller budget for gifts, Christmas meal and any travel you do in the holidays.

## Cut Back on Who You Buy For

There are a few ways to do this. One is to buy only for those in your family under 18 years of age. Another way is to buy only for those you will see in person. Drawing names and buying one gift is another way to cut back on who you buy for.

## Give Homemade Gifts (with caution)

Giving something you've made is a nice way to give gifts. Be careful, though, because some home made gifts take more time and money than if you were to shop and buy a gift from a store.

## Give the Gift of Time

November and December can get very busy. Consider offering the gift of time with your family and friends. Book a lunch or dinner date, a coffee time (out of your house if you can) or other get together in January or February when your schedule isn't so busy.

## Talk With Your Family

Have an honest and up front conversation with your family and brainstorm other ideas on how each of you can save a few dollars this holiday season.

# How to Have a Happy Holiday Without Going Broke

## Personal Planner

### Who I Will NOT be Buying for This Year:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### My Budget:

Minimum \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum \_\_\_\_\_

### Who I Can Give the Gift of Time

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

We will get together on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
(date and time) (location)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

We will get together on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
(date and time) (location)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

We will get together on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
(date and time) (location)

### Other ideas:

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_____
_____
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