

# Holiday Stress Putting “Happy” Back in the Holidays

Presented by  
CIGNA Employee Assistance Program



# Seminar Goals

- Identify the main sources of holiday stress
- Learn ways to manage holiday stress
- Develop a personal holiday self-care plan
- Know the benefits of your Employee Assistance Program (EAP)



# What is Holiday Stress?

- Majority of Americans experience holiday stress
- What is holiday stress?
- Identify primary sources of holiday stress



# Healthy Holiday Tip #1

- Let go of unrealistic expectations:
  - Can't recreate the past
  - There is no perfect holiday



# Healthy Holiday Tip #2

- Try not to isolate yourself:
  - Keep busy
  - Invite others to get together
  - Be proactive, not reactive
  - Seek support



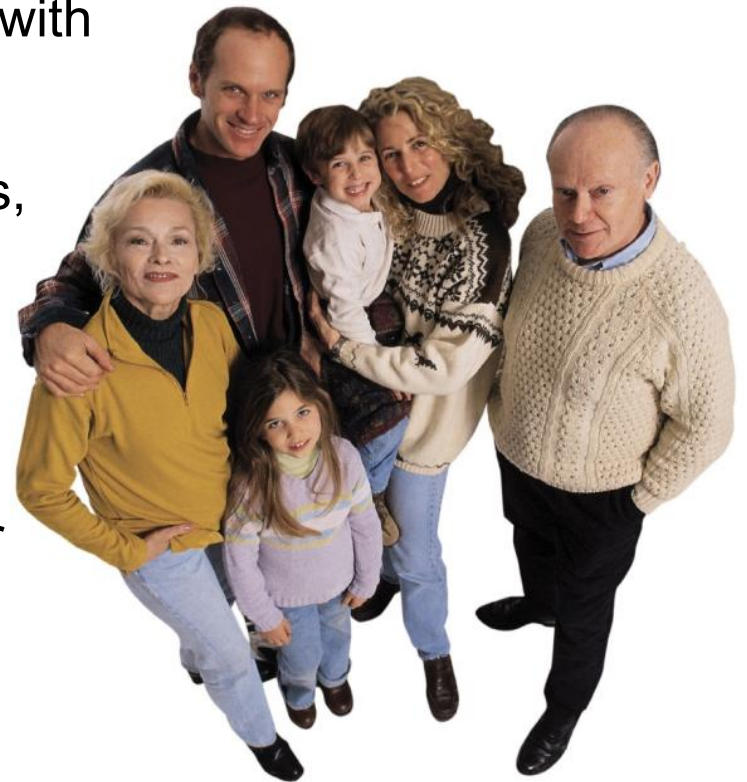
# Healthy Holiday Tip #3

- Re-evaluate your traditions:
  - Are they too stressful?
  - Are they too time-consuming?



# Healthy Holiday Tip #4

- Don't expect family problems to disappear just because it's the holiday season:
  - Reduce the time you plan to spend with those family members
  - Let go of past conflicts, resentments, practice forgiveness
  - Balance your needs with your family's needs
  - Build structure into holiday plans for divorced and blended families



# Healthy Holiday Tip #5

- Don't over-commit yourself:
  - Eliminate stressful or unnecessary activities and chores
  - Learn to say “no”
  - Delegate tasks



# Healthy Holiday Tip #6

- Start saving early:
  - Set aside a holiday fund
  - Limit yourself on the simple things



# Healthy Holiday Tip #7

- Negotiate gift-giving limits:
  - Discuss gift spending limits
  - Consider alternatives
  - Give to those in need



# Healthy Holiday Tip #8

## ■ Budget boosters:

- Include all expenses in seasonal budget
- Budget money, not emotions
- Use cash or pre-paid card to enforce spending limits
- Keep a record of what is spent to stay on track
- Recognize the real value of gift giving



# Healthy Holiday Tip #9

- Back to basics – practical time-saving tips:
  - Plan ahead
  - Use technology
  - Get organized



# Healthy Holiday Tip #10

- Shopping showdown:
  - Plan ahead
  - Use technology
  - Get organized



# Healthy Holiday Tip #11

- It's about the kids:
  - Creating positive memories and traditions
  - Keep them involved
  - Help them set their own realistic expectations
  - Mind their needs and schedules



# Healthy Holiday Tip #12

- Remember the true meaning of the holidays:
  - Focus on the positive
  - Beware of excessive commercialism
  - Take care of you



# Benefits of the EAP

- Face to Face Sessions
- Confidential
- Prepaid
- Unlimited Telephonic consultation
- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Household benefit
- Work/Life Support such as eldercare, childcare and pet care.
- Financial Services
- Legal Services



# References

American Psychological Association. (2010). Making the Most of the Holiday Season.  
Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/holiday-season.aspx>

