

KEEPING HOLIDAY PRIORITIES IN LINE WITH YOU

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As the holiday season is fast approaching, it's easy to get wrapped up in work events, shopping Black Friday deals, Christmas concerts, religious obligations, school projects and exams, or multiple family functions. In the season of "giving thanks" and "holiday joy", you may find yourself prioritizing others over your own self-care. For example, you may decide to help out with the school play over getting an adequate amount of sleep for a week. Maybe you choose to attend a work Christmas event over staying in for a night with your family. Perhaps you spend extra money on a family vacation, even though your bills are tight this time of year.

I get it - your intentions are to spread the comfort and joy of the holidays. You want to give back to your community and spoil your family and friends. However, the more time, energy, and money you dedicate to others, the less time, energy, and money you have to recharge your own batteries. A balanced person has attention devoted to multiple areas of their life, including their own self-care!

Let's check your priorities!

Rate each of the following life areas from 1 to 5. A "1" means you devote little attention to this part of your life, while a "5" means that you devote a high amount of attention to this area.

Career		Family		Fun/Hobbies	
Social Life		Intimate Relationships		Career/Education	
Home Maintenance		Mental Health/Self-Care		Spirituality	

What can you do?

- Reflect honestly on your ratings. Are there any areas that are getting too much attention? Any areas that could use some more attention?
- Identify which areas of your life you'd like to have the highest priority. How can you adjust your schedule to reflect those priorities? For example, someone who prioritizes their family may need to say "no" to picking up an extra shift at work.
- Know when to cut back. You know yourself best

- pay attention to your needs and be okay saying "no" when you need to.

- Plan ahead. The holiday season often comes with extra events or responsibilities - be sure to schedule in relaxation time. Begin by reviewing last year's calendar and make guesses at when you'll need down time this season.

- Ask for help. Talk to a trusted friend or family member and brainstorm how to readjust your priorities. If you have reached a stuck point or are experiencing high levels of stress, try scheduling an appointment with a therapist or counselor. A professional will have resources to assist you and give you space to reorganize your priorities.

- Don't forget to take care of your basic needs - eating, sleeping, personal hygiene, exercise, attending appointments, taking medication, and managing unhealthy habits. Often during times of stress, many people take shortcuts when it comes to their basic needs.