



# DECEMBER

## Managing Expectations and Stress During the Holidays

### Overcoming Mental Health Obstacles & Achieving Wellness

The holiday season is a time of joy and celebration; however, it is also a time of great stress, tight schedules, and expensive purchases. Holiday-related stress affects individuals' personal and professional lives. It is important to identify stressors and manage expectations this season.

#### HOLIDAY STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Both men and women alike report an increase in stress during the holidays, with 60% of survey recipients reporting feeling distracted while on the job due to holiday-related concerns. During this time of year, maintaining a healthy work-life balance becomes increasingly difficult. In addition to the challenges holidays present, many employees simultaneously struggle with seasonal affective disorder, depression, anxiety, grief, strained relationships, and financial burdens.

Fortunately, there are ways to help manage holiday anxieties:

- **Strictly enforce a reasonable work-life balance.** Be sure to separate your professional and personal goals, and work toward one at a time. During work hours, give your full attention to the task at hand, and when it's time to go home, shift your attention to your personal needs. By separating your goals, you prevent yourself from being overwhelmed.
- **Create a realistic to-do list.** Take the time to create a schedule to help you effectively manage your time. It's true that you have a finite amount of time to finish your to-do list, but with mindful planning, you can prevent double-booking and know what you can realistically accomplish.
- **Ask for help when necessary.** The holiday season can cause you to feel isolated and like you must complete tasks alone. When feeling overwhelmed or stressed, ask a teammate or leader for support. Your team can help you in a variety of ways, so don't be afraid to ask for what you need to get the job done.

#### HOLIDAY STRESS OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE

Due to inflation, this holiday season is predicted to be more expensive than in previous years. If finances are tight, here are a few ways to manage expectations:

- **Focus on making memories.** The holidays are about keeping nostalgic traditions, strengthening relationships, and creating new memories. If you put an emphasis on these things rather than dwelling on what you don't or can't have, you will have a much more meaningful holiday.
- **Be transparent.** If the family needs to cut back on presents, be upfront and honest. Friends, family, and even children are capable of understanding. In return, you may find individuals are even more thankful you still thought of them during difficult times.
- **Be strategic with finances.** Perhaps this season, everyone receives one meaningful gift rather than a slew of items. If that is still a heavy burden, try a Pollyanna style of gift-giving with a low price limit. If you are looking to purchase a specific gift for someone that is expensive, ask to share the cost with another person.

This holiday season, focus on what truly matters and take active steps to prioritize a meaningful holiday experience.

As 2022 comes to an end, Creative Benefits, Inc. will continue to send you valuable information and resources to help you prioritize your mental health and well-being in 2023.