

Happy Holidays?  
CHI Health EAP  
Karen Williams, MC, LIMHP

For some of us, it might be just a wee bit early to start thinking about the holidays. But, Halloween is truly just around the corner – and then it’s basically a fast-moving train ride to New Year’s Eve. Rather than waiting until the last minute to offer tips to help us through the holiday season, what if we started to mindfully prepare now?

Preparing for the holidays often includes taking a close look at the food and gift budget, meal options, guest list and, of course, COVID considerations for family members and loved ones.

Along with all these important preparations, what if we could start including important preparations for our own self care? Because holidays are frequently about giving to others, many push ourselves to the limit with poor diet, lack of sleep, too much alcohol, and other physically and mentally draining choices.

There’s no reason these choices can’t change, even just a little bit, to produce a more peaceful, relaxing and enjoyable holiday season. Here’s a few ideas to consider along the way:

1. Just say “no” to perfectionism – set realistic expectations for yourself and others.
2. Balance time to be with others and also some quiet time just for you.
3. Delegate duties to other family members – make it a team effort. It doesn’t have to all be on you.

Every family is different, and there are many beautiful traditions just getting started this time of year. Mindfully taking your family, your traditions, and *yourself* into consideration could make this a truly lovely holiday season for everyone.