

## Will holiday shopping be uplifting

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Can you create a world of balance in your surroundings? Do you ever feel like you need more hours in a day to accomplish everything on your list? Will you ever get caught up? With the holidays fast approaching, are you already panicking? Is shopping for a present on your short list, but enough time is not? Is there any way to be “in control” instead of at the mercy of the calendar, your boss, your family and your social obligations?

There are a number of times through out the year that can be stressful but the most notable is the holiday season. This is the one time of the year that your focus should be on family, friends and the reasons for celebrating the season. Unfortunately, in an already exceedingly full schedule, the gift buying, home preparations, decorations and social commitments often find even the staunchest person “over committed” and “under energized”.

Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukah or something else, it is truly the season to be joyful and honor the reason you celebrate. To remain energized and encourage positive energy in your surroundings during the holidays, keep your home very grounded and centered on the things that mean the most to you, especially relationships; relationships with your time honored belief systems, with others and self. Place a single, beautiful red candle in the south area of your living room. Surround this candle with things you love that remind you of the reason for you personally celebrating the season. If your reason is a gathering of family around a dinner table then place pictures of your family, children and grandchildren around the candle. If your reason is the birth of Jesus then surround the candle with a small nativity scene. If you celebrate Hanukah, use your appropriate symbolism to surround your candle. After making sure the candle will burn safely, burn it for at least one hour each day beginning on the day you start celebrating your holiday season, ending on the evening of your celebration. You simply need to decide when you start celebrating; the day you decorate the house, the day you start shopping, the day you start baking, you choose. By seeing the candle burning it will help you focus on being “in

control”, your relationships and the reason you celebrate your holiday season instead of focusing on the stress.

Lists are very important to help maintain your “in control” status instead of caving to the stress of the moment. Make various lists for your shopping needs, i.e. gifts, food, wine, stamps, etc. Organize the things on these lists by the dates you need them and stick to those dates. If presents need to be shipped out of town they should be first on the gift list. If you are also baking cookies to ship with those presents then those ingredients should be on the top of your grocery list and purchased with ample time left to bake them so they can be included with the gifts. Organization saves you time and dramatically reduces the stress in your world.

Use your calendar as a scheduler for the weeks leading up to your holiday celebrations. Coordinate your lists and your daily commitments on your calendar. Then add your important social and family events. Once you have made note of all of your important events add things only if they are a “command performance” or something you would “love to do”. Things you “love to do” energize you. As soon as you over commit, stress settles in and is hard to get rid of. By faithfully using your calendar as your scheduler and not straying from it, you will be “in control” and will enjoy the holiday season more.

When shopping for holiday gift items remember, “the perfect gift is something the recipient will love not something you would love to give them”. And, if the budget permits, purchase one thing that you absolutely love just for you. Holidays are often thought of as a time to give to others but while you are in the process of making so many other people happy and energizing them, you need to energize yourself and uplift your spirits as well. Remembering the reason for celebrating your holiday season, keeping the process in perspective and in control by using lists and your calendar will reduce stress and be an uplifting celebration.