

## Roadmap to Holiday Joy: Start Now

Do you ever daydream about how great it would feel if, for just one day everything in your life was great – no financial bad news, no weather disasters, no unexpected illnesses, and no new repair problems on computers, cars or your home. In addition, a time when all your important relationships stay united and loyal?

While these are just a few of the issues most deal with daily, the list of things everyone worries about has dramatically expanded in recent years with the advent of terrorism, instant communications, a floundering housing market and joblessness. The usual phobias still exist but are superseded by fears of financial failure, public ridicule – especially through social media sites, rejection/acceptance by parents-employers-friends-loved ones, even the end of the world with 2012 fast approaching, often referred to as the last recorded year on the Mayan calendar.

In the categories of financial fear as well as rejection and joblessness comes a sub-category, the fear of the forthcoming holiday season. With Hanukkah and Christmas some 110-115 days away, many who already feel overwhelmed say that just thinking about holiday shopping, entertaining and added expenses contributes to their feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. Life is already out of balance and the upcoming holiday season throws everything further out of balance.

The good news is that the upcoming holiday season does not need to be filled with dread and stress. **Don't wait, plan now to create the holiday celebrations you would like to enjoy** so they are both financially and emotionally achievable and less stressful. Start now by developing your personal holiday roadmap giving you direction on how to fully enjoy the holidays no matter what your circumstances.

### Roadmap to an Enjoyable Holiday Season

**Begin Now!** Don't wait until you are "in the holiday mood" or to see how much money you will have left to spend when December 1<sup>st</sup> arrives. Use the Feng Shui principle of clearing the clutter by removing preconceived notions of holiday's past from your thinking. Then determine how you want to celebrate the holidays this year and how you are going to pay for it.

Next, make lists of things that are important for your celebrations to be meaningful. This list becomes your roadmap to get you there and keep you on track. This step is very important – do not procrastinate and wait for some magical time in the future when you think you will be more in the mood. By doing it now, you will be much more realistic

because you take emotional aspect out of the shopping, planning and preparation phases. Create a gift list and carry it with you at all times so you can refer to it at a moment's notice and purchase items as you see them. By doing so,

- You will save time by purchasing items when you see them.
- You will save money because you can price shop and you will be less likely to do impulse shopping which is costly.
- You will reduce stress by not having to do everything within a 30-day period and a tight one-month budget. Stress frowns will turn into smiles.

**Determine Today what is Most Important!** Just what is it that makes the holiday season important to you and your family? What is on your list:

- Giving gifts – will they all be purchased or handcrafted
- Traveling to see family
- Having family and friends in for dinner on the day of the celebration
- Entertaining friends and co-workers
- Helping the needy
- Participating in church or synagogue activities

If it is giving as many gifts as you can afford, then get busy today and start your shopping at a slow steady pace. If you are going to handcraft them, do not waste one more minute – begin. You will be done well in advance, your expenses will be budgeted over several months and you will have enough time left to ship packages if necessary. If you want to travel to see family members, get your airline tickets now – it still is more cost effective to ticket well in advance.

Rank the items on your roadmap in order of importance on your list and always start with number one unless it is something you can only do during the holiday season such as participate in a religious activity; and then **do it first**. Everything else should take second place to that No. 1 thing. If you complete No. 1 and accomplish just a few others, you will feel your holiday season was a complete success and filled with more joy and less stress.

**Do something kind for yourself!** Do you put yourself on your list – if yes are you always last? Do something for yourself once a week so you can stay energized and regenerated. If you don't take care of you, **who will?** You need to be nurtured and loved right along with all of those other special people in your life.

Put a subcategory on your roadmap under each of the items on your list called "taking care of me." Then, do little things just for you such as; buy yourself a gift, spend one day at a spa, sit down and watch a favorite movie, read old time classic stories, take a bubble bath. Do something that will bring you joy while the hectic world races by.

**Don't Wait Until the Holidays Arrive!** Take action now. If the smell of baked goods or mulled cider/wine reminds you of Christmas's Past or Hanukkah gatherings, use candles to create the home baked fragrances or pick up pastries at a bakery. A sense of love and security from past memories of family and friends gathered together will serve to both set you in motion and keep you calm.

The holidays are as much about nurtured feelings and good times together as they are about all the trappings modern society has foisted upon today's celebrations. Good times come from creating a loving atmosphere and enjoying time spent together, not how many gifts are exchanged, how big the party was or how opulent the meal was.

By following your roadmap and beginning now, you will prevent the stress that abounds during such a busy time of the year. Make this holiday season hassle-free and affordable which automatically makes it less stress-filled and more enjoyable.

© Pat Heydlauff, all rights reserved 2011

Pat Heydlauff speaks from experience. She works with organizations that want to create an environment where employees are engaged, encouraged and involved, and with people who want to be in control, anxiety-free and confident. She is the author of *Feng Shui, So Easy a Child Can Do It* and can be reached at 561-799-3443 or [www.energy-by-design.com](http://www.energy-by-design.com). – for Feng Shui music for meditation, relaxation and energizing <http://www.energy-by-design.com/HealingMusic.html>. Visit her strictly business site by clicking here [www.engagetolead.com](http://www.engagetolead.com).