



## Jumpstart Your Healing - Recipe for Handling Holiday Stress

**Greetings to everyone.** We are coming into the holiday season -parties and celebrations, getting together with family and friends. It is a very busy time and often stressful. In addition to all our regular tasks and commitments we now have to juggle the social calendar - and get our Christmas shopping done ! Do you sometimes wish that all this activity could be spread out over the year rather than bunched into a few weeks at the end of the year ?

Here is a reminder of a few basic stress/time management strategies:

- prioritize
- plan and schedule tasks and set realistic expectations for the day, the week, etc.
- delegate and ask for help
- take time out to restore yourself
- find the fun and joy in whatever you do
- ... and remember everything is easier from a place of relaxation.

And the holiday season can be stressful for other reasons too. As much as we may love to get together with our families, visiting with our parents and siblings can bring up tensions and discomforts. Do you ever have moments when you are aware of being very discomforted and even irritated beyond what the situation calls for? Or maybe you just feel a growing dis-ease or wave of emotion such as sadness or a feeling of being inadequate.

As an adult and having lived your own life for many years, coming together into your family of origin can bring up old emotional issues - unfinished business. In the context of our original family, we may experience the best of times and the worst of times and often both. Why is that you may ask? Well, our first family is what stamped us with patterns of behavior, of emotional responses, of conditioning about ourselves and the world, and of social responses to others. Our first family is the crucible in which our personalities were forged and it is the setting where the unfinished raw edges can continue to chafe and where our emotional buttons can so easily get pushed.

However, help is at hand - there are steps to neutralize 'our buttons' and

move out of reaction mode and its associated distress. The benefits are that we learn about ourselves, give ourselves choices, and take more control of our lives. Most importantly we can 'de-stress' ourselves and can find more ease, joy, and happiness which leads to better overall health as we move from unconscious reaction to more conscious choice.

1) Take responsibility for your reactions, for your buttons being pushed.

Taking

responsibility is the first step toward empowerment because you step out of victim mode and open yourself up to choice.

2) Align your attitude for change - be willing to become the change that you want to see in your relationship with your parents, for example, rather than wait for your parents to change.

3) Start by being aware of when discomfort or irritation or strong emotion is beginning to arise in you.

4) Push your PAUSE button - as much as possible avoid reacting on the spot.

- breathe
- relax, say to yourself - ' it's OK, I don't have to do anything in this moment. I can just notice what I am feeling and take the time to find out what my needs are first before I act. '
- be curious about what is coming up for you
- say and do nothing in the moment, but rather go with the flow and observe yourself.

5) as soon as you are able, take time for self-reflection to revisit the situation and explore the feelings that came up for you

- your first reaction
- the underlying feelings and self-talk
- For example - the first reaction may have been anger, and underneath that you may find a feeling of hurt or a sense of not being heard or of not being thought capable.
- Be clear that these are your thoughts about you, your story about you, and not necessarily what others in the situation are saying and thinking about you (unless they express it to you - and even if they do express it to you, it is not about you really but about themselves which they are projecting on to you. Always remember, " what other people think about me is none of my business - it's their business ").  
- this step is about bringing up your internal tape so that you can prepare to change it.

6) ask yourself -

- What age am I feeling in this situation? Very often it is a younger 'wounded' self that has been triggered.
- What internal tape am I playing? And is it even 'true' now?

- How does it make me feel?
- How do I want to feel or think in the 'here and now'? What do I want to hear on my tape?

7) consider what action, if any, is required to move you toward more ease with the situation.

- Your self-reflection (in steps 5 and 6 above) may be all you need for change.
- You may need to prepare to handle the situation differently when it comes around next time.
- You may need to speak up for yourself and address the person involved.  
*(How to communicate your needs so others will listen is the topic for another Newsletter.)*
- ... and you may realize that you need to seek further help and support from a counselor or therapist, especially if there is a lot of strong feelings or if you are feeling very stuck or if you have tried to talk with the person and the situation has got worse.

When you use this recipe, you help move yourself out of reacting to the situation and give yourself more choices. It will help move you along a path of self-discovery and positive change - toward greater freedom, well-being, and happiness.

Remember you are the power in your life to make yourself happier and healthier.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Upcoming events:**

**Introductory Evening Presentations**

Date - Monday, January 21st  
 Location - TBA  
 Time - 7:30 PM

**Monthly Evening Seminar topic for January - ' Battling the Weight Issue '**

Date - Monday, February 5th ( Please note the change from a proposed January date)  
 Location - TBA  
 Time - 7:30 PM

**' Jumpstart your healing journey ' Workshop**

Date - Saturday, February 9th  
 Location - likely at the Fraserview Village centre  
 Time - from 9 to 4:30 PM  
*(Note: this workshop is limited to 12 participants.)*

Mark your calendars and notify me of interest for any of the above events by e-mailing me to [nelie@keystototalhealing.com](mailto:nelie@keystototalhealing.com).

For your convenience, you may register online on the website after January 10th at [www.keystototalhealing.com](http://www.keystototalhealing.com).

I look forward to seeing you at the seminars and sharing healing knowledge with you.

And finally, I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful holiday season and blessings for the New Year.

Best of health and healing,

Nelie

Copyright 2007 Nelie Johnson/Keys To Total Healing  
[www.keystototalhealing.com](http://www.keystototalhealing.com)