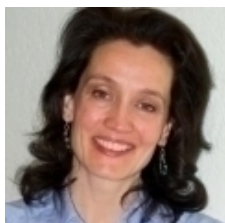


Setting a reasonable pace, expectations make for happy holidays

By Mandy Kendall

The holiday period can be busy enough with present buying, menu planning, travel arrangements, house decorating and more that day-to-day routines can often get thrown into disarray. Healthy eating and exercising can often go by the wayside and we may end up feeling like we need a vacation after all the festivities.

Figuring out what is most important to you and your family will help prevent you from being drawn into other people's agendas and feeling exhausted at the end of it all.



Mandy
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So, here are a few more holiday *Qwik-e* tips to help you have your favorite Christmas this year:

Plan – I know, I know. I've talked about lists many times, but they really do help. You can use them to prioritize into "must do" and "nice to do" sections. You can also add a time element to them; what time a task needs to be completed by or how long it should take you to do. If you list out what needs to be done and how long it should take you, you will quickly find out if you have enough hours in the day and where you might

need to delegate or rethink.

Preparation or socializing – No time to do both? Having a baking party with girlfriends or a group gift shopping expedition will make sure you don't miss out on time with family and loved ones.

Set parameters – We can't do it all. Set the important things taken care of first (this means taking care of you, too) and get to less crucial things if you can. If you can't do it all, don't beat yourself up. Pick and choose your holiday engagements. Map them out in your calendar and be honest as to whether you really want to go or just feel obliged to.

Pace yourself – Adding some down time in your calendar to do what you want to do, whether it's some alone time with a book in the bath, or catching up with a special friend, will help preserve your energy and sense of humor.

Gifts – Are often the most costly part of Christmas. Setting a price limit with family or friends can make sure the spending doesn't get out of hand. Some families choose to focus on gifts only for the kids, just make sure the big kids in the family won't feel left out. A last minute dash to the store for a forgotten present can be avoided by giving the person your own gift card, i.e. promising them something they would enjoy doing with you; perhaps a movie or dinner.

Relax – A calm mind is a productive mind. A few minutes to yourself will do wonders for your focus and stamina. Just pausing to gather yourself with some deep breaths, or doing a few stretches, will set you up for the next stage of your day.

Feed yourself – Skipping breakfast because there's no time is not a great way to start the day. You will likely end up grabbing sugary snacks to help keep you going and throw off your energy levels. Need I say it, but six cups of coffee is not the same as six glasses of water.

Indulge a little – I like to work on the 80/20 rule when it comes to Christmas eating and treating myself. I will indulge, but I will choose my indulgences carefully. It might be one particular party or event, or one particular dish that I decide I won't go without. That way I don't overindulge, but don't feel like I've deprived myself either. If you know your self-control is probably going to desert you, then how about making a pact with a friend to hit the gym in the New Year?

What will be will be – If you have a tendency to want to control everything and every detail, be daring this year and let go a little. Let others take charge and enjoy what happens. Sometimes the most unexpected things make for the best memories.

Wishing you and yours a very happy and healthy Christmas.

Until next time.

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Note: Join the Health Connective team this January and kick start your New Year with a New You. Feel fabulous with a nutritional cleansing and weight release program and a few sessions with a holistic health professional of your choice. Email connect@healthconnective.com for more details.

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe, which aligns wellness seekers with their ideal wellness provider. If you have questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and well-being topic, drop her an email at connect@healthconnective.com or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.