

# COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE FOX RIVER VALLEY



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## Our Tips For A Stress-Free Holiday Season

- Take time to give thanks every morning and evening. Count your blessings one by one. It's amazing what a stress reliever this can be.
- Don't try to cook every special dish that grandmother used to make. Preparing one or two of her recipes each holiday is sufficient for conjuring up those nostalgic feelings.
- Today's grocery stores have wonderful catering services that can do the work for you.
- Avoid watching cooking programs on television during the holidays. You'll only experience guilt and inadequacy.
- Make three lists: (1) Things that are essential to do, (2) Things that would be nice to do, (3) Things that are unimportant to do. Only tackle what your time and energy will allow.
- Set aside 15 minutes each day to stare into space. Take deep breaths and relax.
- Sit in front of the fireplace or, if you don't have a fireplace, sit in front of a candle and listen to Christmas carols or Chanukah songs.
- Watch an old Christmas movie that has special meaning to you and your family.

- Wrap your presents as you buy them. Staying up until midnight on Christmas Eve should be optional – not mandatory.
- Instead of buying “things,” wrap up a box with an invitation to have dinner when the crowds are down in January.
- Talk during meals about family traditions from the past. What was special then that is missing from your life now?
- Turn off the news during dinnertime.
- Remember, “Good enough is good enough.”
- We don’t have to attend every event that comes our way during the holidays. Graciously decline and offer to meet during a less hectic time of the year.
- Surprise someone who would not expect a favor from you. This will bring light to your life (and theirs).
- Give your best smile to others as you wait in shopping lines. If someone is visibly stressed, offer your place in line to lessen his or her burdens.
- Walk through the streets slowly to be a part of the festive season. Enjoy the moment.
- Repeat the following phrase to yourself throughout the day – “I’m so lucky to be alive. Our holidays will be enjoyable and meaningful.”
- As the stress lessens, give yourself a hug.

*Happy Holidays!*