

Interlock Talk

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Holiday Organizing: 10 Tips to Keep you On Track, On Time... and On Budget!

The holidays are a time to enjoy quality time with family and friends... *if you can find it.* During the festive season unrealistic demands can be placed on our schedules and our wallets. Here are our tips for helping you get the most out of the holidays:

1. Delegate, delegate, delegate.

All the great leaders do it. Rely on the strengths and interests of those around you – does your son or daughter display a creative streak? Involve them in decorating or gift-wrapping. By involving others in the things they most enjoy they get into the holiday spirit and you gain precious time.

2. Be focused with your finances.

The holiday season is not an excuse to overspend; create a budget and stick to it. Making lists will help reduce impulse buying and limit your chances of overspending. Avoiding hefty credit card bills during the grey winter months of January and February is the best gift you can give yourself.

3. Don't be a hero. Know when to say no. As your (e)mail box begins to fill up with invitations don't be afraid to pick and choose.

Rather than berating yourself for declining an invitation, congratulate yourself for living up to your holiday “self-care” commitment.

4. Avoid the malls. Shop online.

Staying away from crowded stores and parking lots will ease the stress of the holidays. Most large retailers today allow – and encourage – consumers to buy products and services through their websites and often include shipping costs. This is particularly helpful for those gifts being sent out of town. Your benefits are in the savings... time and money!

5. Reduce, reuse, recycle.

Do you really need to give your friend yet another sweater? Has a family member been coveting that crystal candy dish you never use? With the all the emphasis on waste reduction and environmentally-friendly policies, it is important to re-use and yes, re-gift useful items. Give a gift to the environment save your bags and bows and re-use them next year.

6. Make work work for you.

Everyone's busy during the holidays. Ask around and see which colleagues would be interested in a joint activity like a Cookie Exchange.

One recipe per person, then each person swaps a dozen amongst the group, and voila –a variety of delicious baked goods to wow your holiday guests.

7. Get involved in the community.

At a time when most of us are focused on giving it only makes sense to think of those less fortunate than ourselves. Whether it's 'adopting a family' to provide them with the means to hold their own celebration, or helping out for an afternoon in a soup kitchen, the true holiday spirit can be found in compassion, generosity and kindness.

8. Seek simple joys.

What do the holidays mean to you? Is it a time to celebrate religion, tradition or time with friends and family? Take a step back from the commercial trappings of the season and save your money by connecting with the people and activities that are special to you. Celebrate the simple stress-free joys of the season.

9. Don't expect perfection.

Remember, we can't all be Martha Stewart. Try and let go of, or at least lower, the increased expectations many of us place on ourselves at this time of year. Keep a healthy perspective; the burned cookies, mismatched place settings, and chaotic house are all just part of the season.

10. The best gift you can give your friends and family is you!!

Make sure to take time for yourself. Whether it's a hot bubble bath, a walk with the dog, or even 20 minutes curled up on the sofa with a favourite magazine take care of your emotional and physical well-being. The more you invest in yourself, the more energy you will have to devote to your colleagues, friends and family



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If you are struggling with holiday blues, or with any other personal, family or work-related issues, consider calling Interlock for help.

Interlock provides professional, confidential counselling at no charge to eligible employees and family members.



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