Holiday Stress Assessment for Caregivers

Evaluate the amount of stress a caregiver can handle during the holidays. The following checklist may help decide which things to continue doing through the holidays, which ones to let go, and which ones can be passed on to others.

Holiday Task List

For each traditional holiday task below, first ask yourself the following question:

Would the holidays be the same without it?   For each task where the answer is 'No', first put a check in the 'Keep' column. For each task where the answer is 'Yes' put a check in the 'Eliminate' column.

Keep	Eliminate	Share/Give Away	Task	Person Responsible
☐	☐	☐	Sending holiday cards.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Buying something special to wear for the holidays.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Making homemade holiday gifts.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Helping or encouraging children to make some of their gifts.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Doing your holiday shopping.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Buying gifts for co-workers, teachers, neighbors, friends and family.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Decorating the tree.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Decorating the house, inside and out.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Decorating different rooms of your home.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Baking holiday cookies.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Exchanging holiday cookies.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Shopping for and preparing special traditional foods.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Going to office or school parties.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Going to neighborhood or friends' parties.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Providing "quiet-together" time for immediate family.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Preparing/entertaining special family or out of town guests.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Seeing people you never see any other time of the year.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Having the house clean ... clean!	_____
☐	☐	☐	Attending special or traditional church services.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Attending special activities for children.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Contributing to special funds.	_____
☐	☐	☐	Taking down and storing holiday decorations.	_____

Next, referring back to the above list, for each task that has a check mark in the 'Keep' column, ask yourself this question: *Do you enjoy doing it?*

If the answer is *no*, can it be shared with others? For example, perhaps you enjoy sending holiday cards and feel the holidays wouldn't be the same without them, but really don't enjoy addressing and stamping all the envelopes. Is this a task you could share with your spouse, child, or other relative?

If you could share this task with others, can someone else assume the responsibility? Or, can someone else help get it done? Who might that person be?

Once you've identified each task that could be shared with or given away to someone else (or others) to handle, write that individual's name (or the names of those persons) in the right-hand column next to that task.

When you've finished, you should have a task list that is much shorter than when you started, and a list of others you can enlist to help take some of the stress out of your holiday!