

HO, HO, HOLD THE STRESS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



IN THIS EDITION:

Yuletide Greetings from Coach Jaime

1

What's Your Holiday Wishlist?

2

City Sidewalks, Busy Sidewalks: Potential Stressors to Watch Out For

4

Happy Hour - This Year's *MUST HAVE* Cocktail Recipe

5

Making a List, Checking it Twice: Where to Focus Your Energy This Holiday

6

THE HOLIDAYS - STRESSFUL OR STRESS-FREE?

Amongst all the joy (and candy canes!) of the holiday season, there are also many potential stressors. Heaped upon the day-to-day hustle and bustle of everyday life, you now have added activities, tasks, deadlines, engagements, and the dreaded realization there's still one other thing you forgot.

Heading into this holiday season, after a particularly challenging and trying year, I wanted to acknowledge the reality of the hard parts of the holiday season and to offer some tips and exercises to help you maintain your calm and grow your holiday resilience.

Wishing you a happy and safe holiday season, full of love,

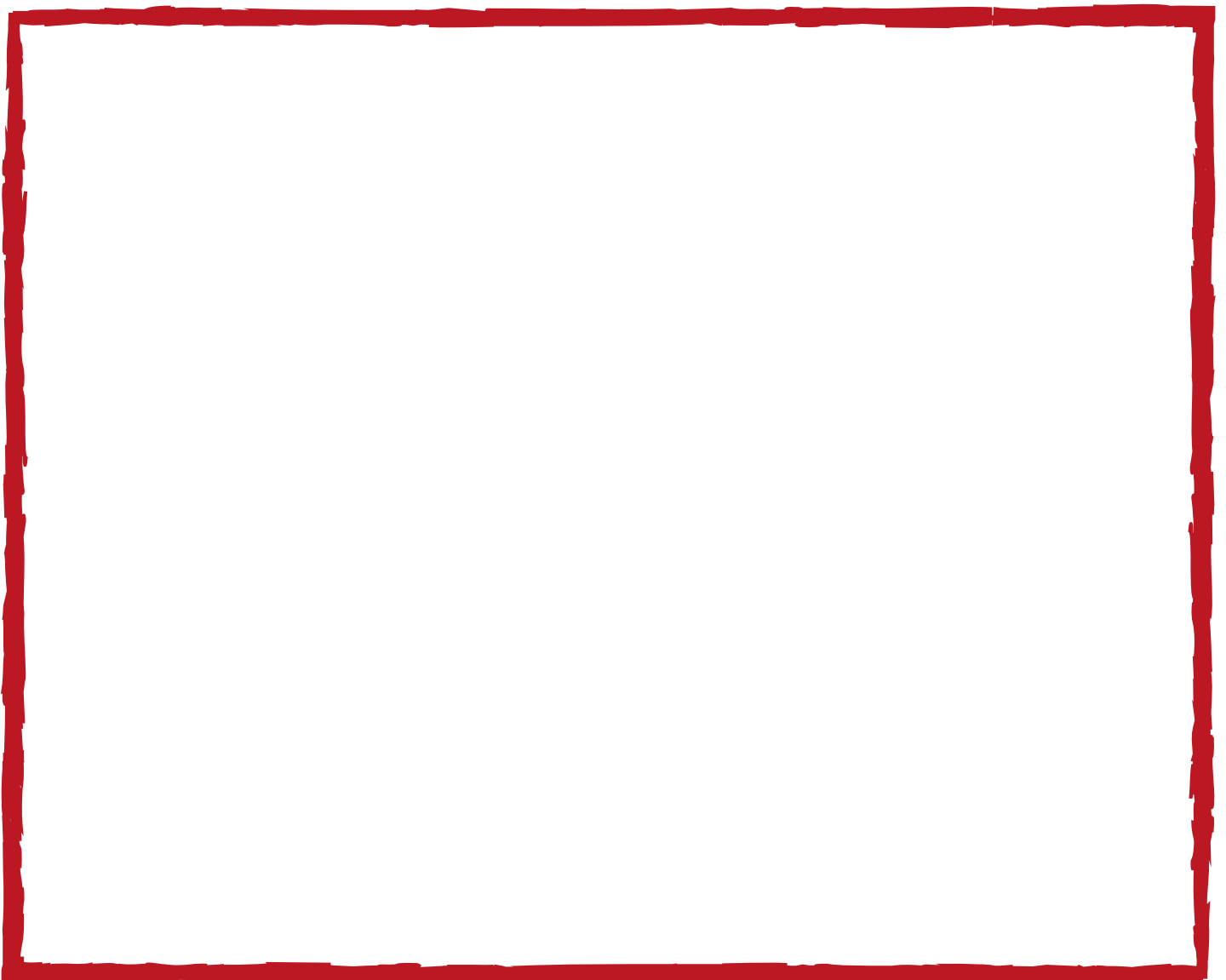
Jaime

CREATE YOUR HOLIDAY VISION

To proactively combat excess holiday stress and supercharge this season, try putting your focus on the experience you want to have. Create a vision that represents the atmosphere and tone you want to enjoy. In other words, what you do want your holidays to look like, be like, feel like?

This tool is designed to help you explore, discover, and focus on what you're looking to create, achieve, and feel this holiday season. A vision board can be anything that inspires you. That includes photos, drawings, words, quotes, or anything else that represents your holiday aspirations. Some questions to ask yourself could be: What represents the important things for you this year? What strengths and values will help you embody this vision? What obstacles might get in your way? How will you adapt to them? Who do you want to be this holiday season?

Vision boards are excellent for indulging your imagination while creating a visual representation of your deepest desires, inspiring you to make them a reality.



WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR:

TOP POTENTIAL HOLIDAY STRESSORS



TIME MANAGEMENT STRESS

There is just SO. MUCH. TO. DO! If the overwhelming amount of 'to-dos' are taking up all your time and energy, it may be helpful to make a list and prioritize your tasks. Ask yourself, "what tasks are **MUST DO's** and what tasks are **NICE TO DO's**?" and then organize accordingly. Be sure to set realistic goals so as not to exhaust yourself and add to your stress.

FINANCIAL STRESS

If the holidays always result in you spending more than you wanted to spend (which then leads to added stress), try creating a list with "**HAVE TO** have money for" and "**WOULD LIKE TO** have money for" to help bring clarity to your priorities. (Recognize that from anywhere?) Kidding aside, connecting with what really matters can also relieve this burden. How can you honour your priorities in a fulfilling way that doesn't break the bank?

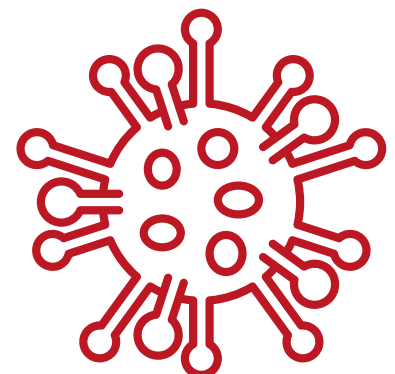


FAMILY DYNAMIC STRESS

During the holidays there can be tricky relationships to navigate, contentious conversation topics, expectations to meet, pressures put on us by ourselves and others, and obligations to fulfill. If family feels like a potential source of holiday stress, consider what triggers or pain-points you may encounter and visualize the clear and focused actions you can take to help handle them with calm intentionality.

PANDEMIC STRESS

This year we are all faced with the added stressor of being in a pandemic during the holidays. For many of us this will mean we don't get to see the people we usually see or do the things we usually do. The truth is, this year, the holidays will look different. But that doesn't mean the holidays still can't be enjoyable. Get creative with your traditions- start new ones or adapt old ones- to create memories you can look back upon fondly.





"Stress is not what happens to us. It's our response **to** what happens. And **response** is something we can choose."
-Maureen Killoran

SELF-CARE: AN ESSENTIAL & FOOLPROOF GIFT TO YOURSELF THIS SEASON

As the saying goes, "you can't pour from an empty cup," so it's important to do things to help you keep your own cup brimming. Self-care is key to managing stress more effectively, and gives you the energy to be more productive, focused, engaged, and inspired.

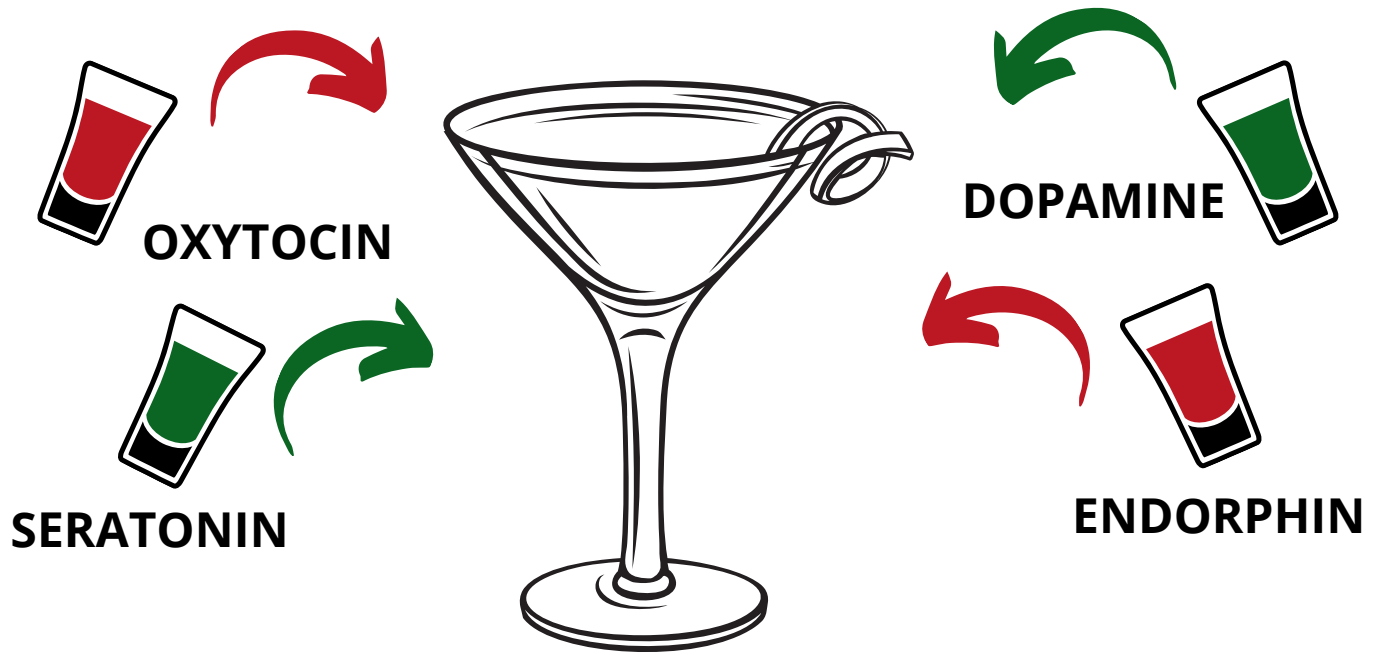
HERE ARE SOME SELF-CARE TIPS THAT I SWEAR BY:

- **Down-time is crucial.** Even if you have to schedule it, make sure you are taking time to relax and unplug.
- **Exercise.** Keeping active helps get the blood flowing and increases the release of happy hormones!
- **Sleep well.** Doctors recommend 7-9 hours of sleep each night for maximum health benefits. Even if you feel like you can survive on less sleep, why try?
- **Get outside!!** Who can't use a breath of fresh air? Getting outside for a minimum of 20 minutes a day can have a big impact on your mood. (Going for a walk outside hits two birds with one stone, especially if you walk briskly to get your heart-rate up!)
- **Make time for the things you love,** as often as possible. A life full of things that 'fill us up' is a happy life indeed! Whether that is reading, listening to your favorite podcast, baking, hosting virtual trivia nights via Zoom, at-home dance party... (you get the idea!)- doing things you love is good for the soul!



"An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly."
-Unknown

MIX YOUR FEEL-GOOD COCKTAIL



OXYTOCIN - The Love Hormone

- Play with a pet
- Play with a baby
- Hug someone
- Give a compliment

DOPAMINE - The Reward Hormone

- Complete a task
- Do self-care activities
- Eat a meal you love
- Celebrate little wins

SEROTONIN - The Mood Stabilizer

- Meditate
- Exercise
- Get some sun
- Be in nature

ENDORPHIN - The Pain Killer

- Laugh
- Eat dark chocolate, drink red wine
- Exercise (for 30 minutes)
- Have sex

WHAT IS YOUR HOLIDAY HAPPINESS RECIPE?

Choose 3 Ingredients Daily:

REFRESH YOUR PERSPECTIVE: PAUSE & REFLECT

"When things go wrong, as they sometimes will;
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill;
When the funds are low and the debts are high;
And you want to smile but you have to sigh.
When all is pressing you down a bit -
Pause and reflect*, but don't you quit."

- John Greenleaf Whittier (*Adapted)

During any time of stress or overwhelm, it can be helpful to take a step back from the situation to understand what you actually have the power to change.

This activity is a favourite, as it offers a refocused perspective on where your energy is the most productive and/or impactful. Simply make a list of everything that is on your mind right now. Take some time to think about each item and which circle it belongs in. If an item belongs to both 'what matters' and 'what you can control', put it in the overlapping (white) area. Focusing your attention to these items is a more effective and productive use of your energy. **THIS** overlapping part of the circles is what best serves you.

