

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly of the Holiday Season – Dealing With Holiday Stress

As joyous as the holidays can be, many people have a difficult time coping with the stress and emotional strain that sometimes comes along with them. This can be particularly true within the legal community, where anxiety and depression are prevalent among lawyers. Though it's the time of year when we focus on giving to others, don't be ashamed to give yourself some much needed attention as well. Remember that part of being an effective lawyer is maintaining your physical and mental health, so follow some of these tips to promote your well-being during the upcoming holiday season.

Delegate

The office party... the bar association mixer... the angel tree gift giving... your intentions are good, but don't feel obligated to tackle these efforts alone. Identify members of your staff who can either assist you with these projects or (even better) who would be thrilled to take them on for you. With so much going on at the end of the year, now is not the time to be a control freak. Delegate tasks that you find stressful. Not only will it take some of the weight off of your shoulders, but you may also find yourself enjoying the holiday festivities instead of dreading them.

Take Some Time Off

Everyone knows that the holidays provide a perfect opportunity for time off with family and friends, but why not claim some “me” time as well? Take advantage of government holidays and court closings by getting away from the office for a spa visit or a cozy few days at a rustic cabin. Use the time to reflect on the past year, plan for the coming year, or to completely shut off your brain all together. Not taking advantage of this lull in activity can have you going into the new year stressed and overwhelmed... and is that really how you want to start 2018? I don't think so.

Talk to Someone

If you are experiencing overwhelming stress or increased sad at this time of year, don't try to deal with these feelings on your own. Find a friend or family member you trust to talk with or seek professional help from a counselor or therapist. There is no shame in getting help from a professional. Would you suggest that your clients go into court without an attorney? Then why do you insist on handling your mental health without a licensed professional? Don't let foolish pride keep you from enjoying the festivities of the holiday season.

There you have it... the good, the bad and the ugly of the upcoming holiday season. It doesn't have to overwhelm you or take your practice off track. With a little preparation and a solid game plan, you can make the holidays enjoyable for your law office staff, as well as yourself.

About Erika Winston:

Erika Winston is a freelance writer with a passion for law. Through her business, The Legal Writing Studio, she helps legal professionals deliver effective written messages. Erika is a regular contributor to [TimeSolv](#) and a variety of other publications.