

News Release

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Holidays and Your State of Mind

Tampa, Florida (December, 2010). What do you think about this time of year? Decorations, gifts, traveling, family and friends...or stress. Have you stopped to think that we are inundated by messages telling us what to do and how to do it? Stores are decorated and have pre-wrapped packages for those last minute spontaneous presents. We find ourselves running to and fro and often wind up feeling exhausted.

Many times we “awake” in January when the bills come and are stunned to see what we have spent. We ask, “How did this happen?” Well, there are a number of reasons. Sometimes we feel embarrassed that we received something from someone and because we might not have the kind of relationship to give them something personal, go out and pay more than we would for even a family member. Sometimes we feel pressured because we know that certain family members or friends are going to give us something so we “have to” reciprocate even if their socio-economic status is far different from ours. Sometimes we act out of guilt. We don’t really want to go to the expense or trouble but they did so we should too. Sometimes we do it because we are concerned about how someone might view us. And this only has to do with the idea of gift giving!!

The same ideas, however, apply when we find ourselves on the road for hours when what we would really like to do is just stay home and relax. So why do we do it? And how do we deal with the frustration and sometimes anger that results. How do you deal with your feelings when you realize that you and your family are the only ones that wind up traveling three hours to be with family when none of them ever even conceive of taking the trip in the opposite direction to your house. Or how do you deal

with it when you feel pressured to buy gifts for your nine nieces and nephews only to find that you get nothing in return. Or how do you deal with having decided that you would buy a “family” gift instead of separate gifts for brother and wife and four kids only to get the distinct impression that they were disappointed.

The answers to these questions is pretty simple: STOP. Take time to reflect and think about what is really important to you and what you want to do without caving in to what you see as pressure.

Remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit available to all employees and dependents of companies contracted with Wood & Associates for providing confidential free professional assistance 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Remember that you or a dependent may contact your EAP regarding any concern that you might have – you don’t have to wait until a problem becomes big to seek help. Above all, keep in mind that concerns develop over time but the way you address them can be changed. If you need help in developing a specific plan to address what you see is a continued pattern of “people pleasing” or an inability to graciously set boundaries or a pattern of doing things you really don’t want to do because you are concerned about what people might think of you, help is available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Just call your EAP and you will be directed to our experienced team of counselors. It is that simple. We will help you cope, find assistance, and guide you down the path to effectively dealing with whatever might be impacting your life.