

## **DON'T GET DOWN WITH THE HOLIDAY BLUES!**

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It's that time of year again! We're off on that "wild ride" – the holiday rollercoaster. Christmas and Hanukah decorations are in the stores well before Halloween. Plus, this year we've been bombarded with the election and repeatedly told by 24 hour news channels about the poor state of our economy. With all this hustle, bustle, gloom, doom, and excitement our emotional lives are bound to experience "highs and lows" – better known as that unwanted guest – the "Holiday Blues!"

We long for idyllic "Hallmark Memories," but, for most of us, the "storybook" family gatherings never happen the way we plan and leave us feeling highly stressed and disappointed. When it's all said and done, it's no wonder we begin the New Year feeling "**Holi-dazed!**" Rather than basking in the glory of the perfect family holiday, we're completely exhausted with old family wounds reopened, and our inner critic lambasting us for not being perfect.

There is a saying, "Good judgment comes from experience -experience comes from bad judgment." So, if we want to break the cycle of perfectionism and self criticism, we need to use our 20-20 hindsight, learn from the past, and make a conscious decision to do things differently.

Some things to remember during the holidays and afterwards: Notice self-imposed *internal pressures* coming from your inner critic. Set your intention to make this year different. Get quiet, go within and listen to your inner voice of reason and wisdom. Ask, "What is in my long term best interest?" Don't try so hard to be perfect. Turn your attention to the positive. Be kind - to yourself and others. Stop trying to be *all things to all people*. And, remember – you are not alone. If you feel "blue," share your feelings with family and friends, or call a professional counselor. Help is available.

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