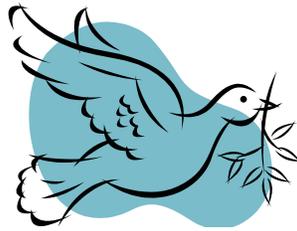


Karen G. Kramer - Space to Breathe
Professional Organizing Services for Your Home and Office



"Space To Breathe" for the Holidays

Even if this is your favorite time of the year, the holidays can be a challenge. Entertaining, traveling, house guests, extended family, cards, gifts, and traditions all bring us joy, but they can be overwhelming, too. **Here are some tips about making this holiday season as peaceful and pleasant as it can be:**

- **Think about what's most important to you about the holidays** and have that determine how you invest your time. Keep your priorities front and center - list them if that helps - and frequently visualize your desired results!
- **Set limits about what you will and won't do - only you can do this for yourself.** We all have limits, and it helps to know what ours are, as well as to differentiate between obligation and choice. Ask yourself: Do I still enjoy this ritual? If so, give it new life, and if not, let it go. You might even create a new ritual or tradition more to your liking.
- **Keep fun on the front burner.** Turn holiday tasks into fun activities with family or friends, and inject them with laughter and good feeling - e.g. making desserts, addressing cards, or wrapping gifts. If tasks/activities aren't fun, consider delegating or deleting them.
- **Invest some time in de-cluttering before the holidays.** Cleared space will make your home and your life more peaceful, and will create room for those new things you inevitably will acquire. (Remember "one-in, one-out...") Perhaps focus the de-cluttering on spaces used a lot during the holidays - the living room, dining room, kitchen, as well as the coat closet, pantry and refrigerator. Even one de-cluttered area will make a difference.
- **Watch out for and avoid perfectionism.** Holidays tend to stir up idealized expectations, overwhelming us in our attempts to meet them. Realistically things can go wrong and will go wrong - life happens. Plan ahead, but then try to go with the flow. "Good enough" really is *good enough!*
- **Self-care is crucial over the holidays.** Remember to exercise, watch what you eat, meditate or to do whatever helps you keep your balance. Even a few deep breaths periodically during the day can make a difference. Watch your expectations, watch your spending, practice acceptance, and take time for yourself when you need it.
- **Give back and volunteer** over the holidays. Community service and helping those less fortunate can relieve stress, improve your mood and help you remember what's important. So do **being grateful** (make this a daily habit) **and practicing kindness** (e.g. let someone in line in front of you, and smile at strangers).

Try even one or two of the above ideas, and afford yourself more peace, joy and "space to breathe" over the holidays!