

Sick of Holiday Stress?

Strategies to Heal Your Holiday Spirit

Yippee-Yuck© Scale

Yippee!	Neutral						Yuck!			
+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5

Snow	+	Your Reaction	=	Yippee/Yuck Rating
Holidays	+	Your Reaction	=	Yippee/Yuck Rating

Event	+	Your Response	=	Outcome
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Every _____ we experience is a direct result of how we **respond** to an individual **event** that occurs.

Yeah-But© Scale

0 = not at all 1 = somewhat 2 = quite a bit 3 = a great deal

YEA! How much of "YEA!" is this for you?		BUT! How much of "BUT!" is this for you?
+3 +2 +1 0	SNOW	0 -1 -2 -3

YEA! How much of "YEA!" is this for you?	THE HOLIDAY SEASON [e.g., decorating, cooking, gifts, family gatherings, etc.]	BUT! How much of "BUT!" is this for you?
+3 +2 +1 0		0 -1 -2 -3
+3 +2 +1 0		0 -1 -2 -3
+3 +2 +1 0		0 -1 -2 -3
+3 +2 +1 0		0 -1 -2 -3

Questions that can help you clear away holiday-related “emotional clutter”

Is your holiday season bogged down with a clutter of “shoulds” and “oughts” that detract from your enjoyment of the season?

Are you newly-weds trying to juggle the long-standing holiday traditions of multiple families?

Are you longing to create or adapt holiday traditions for your own family that your children will treasure as they grow older?

Holiday traditions often include some “emotional clutter” that add unnecessary stress to our lives and hamper our enjoyment of the holiday season.

You might wish to consider the following 4 “clutter-control” questions as helpful guides for choosing which traditions to keep or adapt, and which ones to let go of completely.

1. **How meaningful is it for me?** – How much of an impact does this have on my life? Is it important to me? Can I let it go?
2. **Do I love it?** – Is this something that brings me joy? Or is it something I simply tolerate? Or does it create added stress in my life?
3. **Do I want this?** – Is this something I need or want as part of my life? How important is it to keep this “intact” or is there a way I can reduce the “clutter” effect?
4. **Does this need me?** – If it’s not important to me personally, is it important to someone I care about? Is there something else that I need to consider (or do) about or with this?

Quick Coherence Technique¹

1. **Heart Focus**

Focus your attention in the area of your heart. If you like, you can put your hand over your heart to help. If your mind wanders, just keep shifting your attention back to the area of your heart. Now you’re ready for the next step, Heart Breathing.

2. **Heart Breathing**

As you focus on the area of your heart, imagine your breath is flowing in and out through that area. This helps your mind and energy to stay focused in the heart area and your respiration and heart rhythms to synchronize. Breathe slowly and gently in through your heart (to a count of five or six) and slowly and easily out through your heart (to a count of five or six). Do this until your breathing feels smooth and balanced, not forced. Continue to breathe with ease until you find a natural inner rhythm that feels good to you.

3. **Heart Feeling**

Continue to breathe through the area of your heart. As you do so, recall a positive feeling, a time when you felt good inside, and try to re-experience it. This could be a feeling of appreciation or care toward a special person or a pet, a place you enjoy, or an activity that was fun. Allow yourself to feel this good feeling or appreciation or care. If you can’t feel anything, it’s okay; just try to find a sincere attitude of appreciation or care. Once you’ve found a positive feeling or attitude, you can sustain it by continuing your Heart Focus, Heart Breathing and Heart Feeling. It’s that simple.

In summary, to do Quick Coherence, focus your attention in the area of your heart, imagine you are breathing slowly and gently through your heart to a count of five or six, and then—while continuing to breathe with ease and rhythm through your heart—re-experience a positive feeling or attitude like care, compassion or appreciation.

¹ Excerpted from Childre, D. & Rozman, D. (2005). *Transforming Stress: The HeartMath® Solution for Relieving Worry, Fatigue, and Tension*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc.