Life is more stressful than ever before. Like most things this year, the holiday season may feel like it’s not the same, too. Many are torn between making plans for upcoming holidays and worry about December bringing anxiety about finals. Stressed students are looking for ways to manage this pressure. Here are some tips that can help you manage stress as you prepare for the holiday season:

1. **Prepare Ahead:**
   - **Pace Yourself:** Start preparing early to reduce stress. Break down your tasks into manageable steps and set realistic deadlines.
   - **Set Boundaries:** Communicate your plans and limitations, especially regarding family activities and social obligations.

2. **Manage Your Time:**
   - **Prioritize:** Focus on what matters most and delegate tasks where possible.
   - **Take Breaks:** Schedule regular breaks to relieve stress and refresh your mind.

3. **Exercise Regularly:**
   - **Stay Active:** Engage in physical activities like walking, yoga, or a simple exercise routine. Physical activity can help reduce stress and improve your mood.
   - **Aerobic Exercise:** Regular aerobic exercise can increase endorphins, which have a positive effect on mood.

4. **Stay Connected:**
   - **Social Support:** Reach out to friends and family to share your thoughts and experiences. Social support can help you feel less isolated.
   - **Hobbies:** Engage in hobbies or activities that you enjoy and help you unwind.

5. **Mindfulness:**
   - **Mindful Breathing:** Practice deep breathing exercises to help you relax and stay present.
   - **Mindful Meditation:** Learn and practice meditation to help calm your mind and reduce stress.

6. **Sleep Well:**
   - **Sleep Hygiene:** Establish a consistent sleep routine to ensure you get enough sleep each night.
   - **Sleep Environment:** Create a comfortable sleep environment to help you fall asleep and stay asleep.

7. **Eat Healthy:**
   - **Balanced Diet:** Maintain a balanced diet to provide your body with the nutrients it needs to function at its best.
   - **Hydration:** Drink enough water to stay hydrated and maintain energy levels.

8. **Create a Schedule:**
   - **Family Calendar:** Create a family calendar to stay organized and manage everyone’s activities and responsibilities.
   - **Weekly Planner:** Use a weekly planner to manage your tasks and commitments.

9. **Learn to Let Go:**
   - **Set Realistic Expectations:** Understand that you can’t control everything and it’s okay to let go of things outside your control.
   - **Acceptance:** Learn to accept situations that you can’t change and focus on what you can control.

10. **Seek Support:**
    - **Professional Help:** If stress becomes overwhelming, consider seeking help from a mental health professional.
    - **Support Groups:** Join support groups or online communities where you can connect with others who are experiencing similar challenges.

Remember, it’s important to take care of yourself during the holiday season. By implementing these strategies, you can reduce stress and maintain a positive outlook. Take time to enjoy the season and appreciate the accomplishments of yourself and your families!