



HOLIDAY PLANNER

For Power Couples

2022

HOLIDAY FOCUS

DECEMBER

2022

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

OUR #1 GOAL:



OUR 5 PRIORITIES:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

OUR TO DO:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

December Brain Dump

MON

TUES

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

SUN

#1 - HIS/HERS/OURS

1.

2.

3.

OUR RUNNER UPS...

Family Holiday Planner



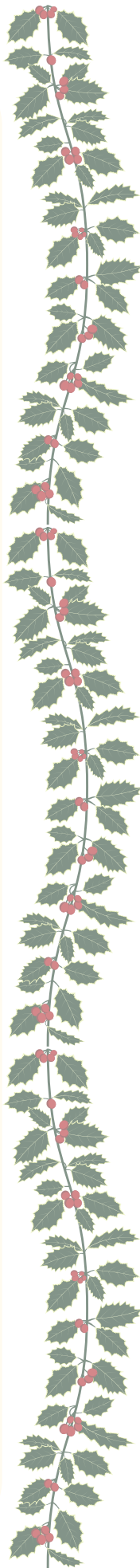
Month:

Week Of:

	MOM	DAD			
M O N					
T U E					
W E D					
T H U					
F R I					
S A T					
S U N					

Notes

*duplicate as needed

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Self Care

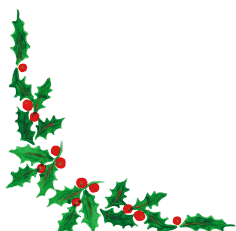


- **Manage Me-Time:** Scheduling time for yourself should be a priority. Self-care is critical to being ready to face the many challenges in our work and personal life, especially as we hurry to complete the work on our desks and prepare for the festivities at home. If we are in a constant state of fight or flight, we can't be at our best. Self-care, such as working out, meditation, or just sitting by the window, brings a level of peace that will serve you when you are around others that may not be managing the stress of their holiday season.
- **Know Yourself:** What type of event do you enjoy? Intimate lunches or raucous revelries? Try to navigate schedules and engagements to maximize the events you will most enjoy and to minimize your stress at the events you prefer less.
- **Maintain Healthy Routines:** If you have done an excellent job with routines the past 10 or 11 months of the year, this is not the time to ditch them! Set boundaries around your time, and do not allow the demands of the season to pull you out of the routines that keep you healthy. You will thank me later!
- **Learn To Say No (thank you).** Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity. *tip - do not feel obligated to explain or justify your 'no,' but if it is necessary, then explain you and your spouse set your holiday schedule weeks ago.... and maybe that will incentivize them to follow suit next time!
- **Don't Abandon Healthy Habits.** Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress, guilt, and physical taxation.

Try these suggestions:

- Have a **healthy snack before holiday meals** so you don't go overboard on foods that would typically be a splurge.
- **Food prep/plan** so you eat healthy meals. (try food prep services, there are often freebie discounts)
- Get plenty of **sleep**. (6-8 hours per night!)
- **Include regular physical activity** in your daily routine, even if it is a brisk walk.
- **Pause & deep breathe**
- **Avoid excessive alcohol**
- **Cut down on the information culture** can produce undue stress, and adjust the time you spend reading news and social media as you see fit.
- **Set Your Intention**, Then Work Toward It

Forget the myth of the superhero who juggles life and the holidays, all while keeping their daily caloric intake under 1,000 thanks to their 4:30 a.m. workout. Set your intention on what your holiday will look like, and work toward it. But don't let *perfect* be the enemy of good. The guardrails you set are flexible, stretching and contracting, just like a pair of Thanksgiving pants.



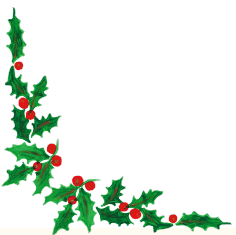
Relationship Management



- **Delicately Defer:** Do you have friends and family you see all year long? If it makes sense, broach deferring a regular get-together while you all cover the bases with people you see less often. Good friends can be a comfort through the holidays so don't defer people who will actively reduce your stress levels.
- **Set aside differences.** Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion. And be understanding if others get upset or distressed when something goes awry. Chances are they're feeling the effects of holiday stress and depression, too.
- **Don't be in a hurry to "fix it."** Spouses should not offer advice too quickly when one of them is suffering from stress. "The cardinal rule when helping your partner de-stress is that understanding must precede advice. You have to let your partner know that you fully understand and empathize with the dilemma before you suggest a solution," he said. When one spouse feels stressed out, the other should take that spouse's side. "This means being supportive, even if you think his or her perspective is unreasonable."
- Use **Strong Back, Soft Front, Wild Heart Method** by Brene Brown's when conflict arises. When we feel fearful, worried or "wobbly," what we need most is to feel connected to our loved ones and community. Unfortunately, we tend to fall into a defensive, guarded posture. Instead, imagine that you have a strong back (to bear whatever discomfort or burden you might feel), a soft front (not armored against conflict but instead open to whatever feelings someone elicits in us), and a wild heart. That last part is critical: The recognition of our wild hearts allows us to experience joy even amid situations that are filled with frustration.

Try these suggestions:

- **Initiate the awkward conversations:** Be the one that initiates the conversation around deferring the get-together with friends and family you see all year. Many people dread and avoid these conversations yet want the same thing. This is your opportunity to feel things out and be the holiday super-hero!
- **Actively Listen:** If and when grievances arise, remain quiet and listen to understand. Then repeat back to them what you understood; try saying, "Ok, I hear you saying(fill in the blank)". Often times what you hear them saying is not what they mean to communicate when they are under stress.
- **Refocus & Practice Gratitude:** When entering into a situation you may be 'less than thrilled about', take 5 minutes to pause, breathe deeply, and reflect on the things in your life you are grateful for.... then refocus and let the current situation pale in comparison to all the blessings you have.



Marriage Synergizing



• Decisions & Duties

- **List out all the chores** and responsibilities that require attention. This will give you an objective view for determining who should be in charge of what.
- **Add three columns** to the list: one for you, one for your partner, and one for both of you.
- **Read the list together.** Discuss each other's perception of how holiday responsibilities were handled in the past, and discuss how you would like them handled this year. *if this gets sensitive, remember to actively listen!
- **Go through the items that are easy to assign** this year and choose who is responsible (you, your partner, or both), check the appropriate task and partner on the list, and set aside the tasks that may need to be talked through for later.
- For the items you didn't assign, **take the time to ask each other open-ended questions** about the task and the difficulties associated with it. Truly listen to what your partner likes and doesn't like, which is an opportunity to learn something new about your partner and their preferences and concerns.

• Take Time to Connect

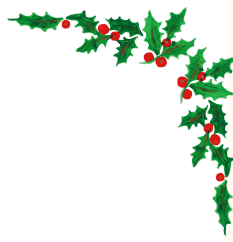
- **Take a timeout** and stop doing for others and start doing for each other. Cook a meal together. Go for a walk. Play a game. Whatever you do, MAKE THE DECISION to take the time to reconnect. Your stress levels will be lower, and your communication can increase.
- **Make intentional time:** It may be difficult to get away from family and friends during a busy holiday season, but making intentional efforts to spend a few hours or an evening together will help you feel more loved and stress-free. Ask some open-ended questions about how they're feeling this holiday season, but don't try to problem-solve. Instead, truly listen to your partner's concerns and express empathy.
- Another way to relieve stress is to **offer compliments**, gratitude, and appreciation to your partner, which can help your partner stay connected to you. Make an extra effort to notice the small things your partner does, such as grocery shopping, wrapping gifts, taking out the trash, or making time for just you, and verbalize your appreciation.
- **Know your spouse.** What keeps them grounded and feeling connected to you? Don't let the chaos of the holiday season pull you away from serving well the person most important in your life. If you're not sure what they need in the moment – ask.

• Manage your stress proactively

- **What works well for you?** Self-awareness helps during busy seasons like the holidays. Do you need time to decompress after activities, or do you need to be social and experience local events? If so, talk about that ahead of time with your spouse. Communicating your needs with each other will make for enjoyable family time.
- **What works well for your marriage:** Think about the good moments from your holidays together. What makes you smile? Whatever it is that creates the good moments, create more opportunities for them to exist. Prioritize these moments in the midst of planning your schedules.
- **When does the conflict occur:** Conflict in marriages during the holiday season can have a trend. Maybe it's all the noise in the car with the kids during an 8-hour trip to your in-laws. Or do you get stressed when you have company for several days? Do you feel out of place at your spouse's work party? Knowing when the conflicts usually occur will help you to identify what triggers the issues in your marriage.
- **How can you respond better:** Talking together about how to respond in good moments will help when walking through the challenging ones. In the good moments, you can talk about what steps you will take when one of you feels stressed, tired, or misunderstood. Discussing this ahead of time will help set you up for success.
- **Be Pleasantly Surprised When Your Partner Sacrifices For You.** In a study published in the Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, researchers found that when participants didn't expect their partner to sacrifice for them, but the partner did, it made them more satisfied with their relationship. On the other hand, when participants expected their partner to sacrifice for them when the partner did, it didn't make them happy. So, if you want to feel happy in your marriage? Expect less and look for all that your partner is doing for you.



Marriage Synergizing cont.



Try these suggestions:

- **Do it together:** If you are going to try something new, do it together: The holidays, with all of the extra stress and demands, is not always the best time to go off on your tangent and try something new without your spouse. But, it CAN be a fun adventure to try something new WITH your spouse!
- **Remove the pressure:** If something you KNOW adds pressure to your spouse, tell them you are 'letting them off the hook' during this season. This may be the small thing that turns everything around regarding stress levels
- **Mindfulness:** Each evening, before going to sleep, share one thing about your spouse that you are grateful for, and be ready to explain WHY you are thankful for it - what it means to you.
- **Sacrifice:** As you go through the 3-column list and you come across something neither of you want to do.... this is a great opportunity to 'sacrifice' AND be surprised!



Work & Business

- **Be Intentional About Personal And Work Tasks:** There will always be only 24 hours each day. Be intentional about how you want to spend it. When you say “yes” to one thing, stop to be clear about what you are saying “no” to. It's always a choice. Set boundaries around your personal and work schedule, and refrain from blurring the lines!
- **Trust Your Process** During the holiday season: It is common for entrepreneurs to focus on things like new year launches, client retention, content creation, all the preparing to be surrounded by family who still does not understand being your own boss is a "real job." It is essential to allow the vision to expand beyond its current form. Work-life harmony calls for you to focus on priority management while maintaining balance and trust in the process you establish.
- **Utilize A Prioritized To-Do List:** Utilize agile frameworks for organizing personal life and business. Maintain a prioritized backlog of to-dos, with the most essential item to complete at the top of the list. Each item enters a simple workflow from "To Do" to "Doing" to "Done." This creates a single-threaded focus on high-value activities and achieves much faster results than multitasking
- **Set Limits And Have Discipline:** Balance is essential. Not everyone can be like Jeff Bezos and live in a harmonious circle, get up without a clock, work out, and not set early morning meetings. We recommend setting limits and having the discipline to manage work with timelines and achievable goals. Leave work at a reasonable time, and you will find yourself in a refreshed and strong mental state of mind.
- **Set Expectations, Then Communicate:** One strategy that works well is to set clear expectations for yourself and then communicate them with others. People will appreciate it when you let them know of your competing demands. If you intend to commit a little time each day to check into either work demands or holiday plans, schedule blocks of time for each and identify only those critical things to get done in those blocks
- **Communicate work schedules clearly:** Make sure everyone knows when you and your team are available and when you'll be on holiday. This can save a lot of confusion down the road. Identify dates that will be completely blacked out with no work progressing. Document these and circulate them so that everyone is in the know. There is nothing more frustrating than being in the office alone when you need help the most.
- **Coordinate Project Coverage:** Address this as early as possible and strategically so that the right people are working on the right things and you minimize stall points along the way. Find out who the backup point person is if your decision-maker is away. Don't wait until the week before the holiday to start this discussion. When coordinating coverage, prioritize the most important things first. You won't be able to do it all. So what can wait until next year?
- **Automate:** Wherever possible, cut down on things you do frequently. Eliminating the manual efforts of running and distributing the same report weekly, for example, can save you valuable time. You'll be busy, and this really should be a year-round thing. Use December as a trial month to automate processes you've wanted to automate all year.
- **Holiday Fun:** Be sure to reserve time on your team's calendars for team bonding or holiday fun. Whether it's a team lunch or a remote team video happy hour, plan for it in your team's availability, so you don't feel guilty squeezing it in at the last minute or people decline in lieu of getting more work done.
- **Don't forget to look up:** It can be tempting to get into an 'end of the year grind,' but don't forget to look up from your monitor every once in a while this month to connect with the people around you and remember the reason for the season!

