

A WEEK IN *Learning*

IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

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After a long day of 2020 planning meetings for our department, I came home and found myself diving into our family calendar. With the next year on my mind, I began to map out what the rest of 2019 will look like as 2020 rapidly approaches. The coming weeks are filled with school holiday concerts, church Christmas pageants, and community/family events (i.e., people standing in the front row, crying 2-year-olds on stage, and double charges for parking spots for an event down the street). I thought to myself, *how in the world am I going to get through this holiday season with so much to do in so little time?* I quickly became overwhelmed with what was needed to wrap up a successful year at work, along with facing what lies ahead in the next few weeks at home.



“Let’s enjoy this time of year, not dread it.”

- Jennifer Brito

In order to distract me from the stresses of adulting, I turned to my Facebook feed to bring me some quick and mindless entertainment. In my search, I came across a blog shared by Health.com called, *25 Ways to Fight Holiday Stress*. Immediately, a few of the tips really hit home for me and I began to hear the jingle bells again. Below is my interpretation of what I read, and how it can be applied to our personal and professional lives.

Do Less, Enjoy More

We tend to go overboard by saying yes to every event we are invited to; agreeing to do the cooking, the one to run all the errands, etc. This relates to our work tasks as well. Sometimes we tend to extend our support past our length of reach because we want to do all that we can for others. Remind yourself to evaluate what you are lending as a helping hand. Do not over-commit and fill your calendars up if there is a chance it won't get done, or if the value in the work could decrease. Instead of jam packing all of my calendars, I am reevaluating what is a priority so there is more time to stop and smell the Poinsettias! Let's enjoy this time of year, not dread it.

Don't Neglect Whatever Cracks You Up

Psychologist Steve Wilson reminds us how laughing like crazy can reduce stress hormones. This common remedy is a great way to handle the holiday season pressures, such as last-minute shopping,

traffic, or unorganized school pageants. In the workplace, using humor or laughter throughout the day can help motivate you and your team members to remain focused and be more productive.

Turn Up the Tunes

Larry taught us all in last week's Week in Learning about the power of music. Research from the University of Maryland has found that, by hearing music you love, you can relax your blood vessels and increase blood flow. This helps keep you cool and calm! Go ahead, let Mariah Carey's *All I Want for Christmas* play loud one more time.

Forget Perfection

I saved the best for last! This one is an ongoing area of improvement for me - I need to remember to stop obsessing over perfection in everything I do. This is a great reminder for us to focus our energy on enjoying those around us. In the workplace, we all want to strive to do our best and hit our goals - just don't forget to utilize your support system when you may need help or need to delegate. Remember, we are all here on one team!

I hope sharing these tips will help you remember to focus on what really matters during this time of year. It may be different for each person, but being more aware of tips similar to these can help align your focus and enjoy what truly is **the most wonderful time of the year!**

Happy Holidays to you, your teams, and your family. Let's make these last moments in 2019 count!