The Holiday Season—
The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

By Dr. Shanesa L. Fenner

The holiday season is a time for family, friends, and fellowship. This quality time is especially important in order to create a special bond among family members. Whether you are cooking, shopping, playing a game, or just catching up, it is the perfect time of year to spend with the ones you love, care for, and to experience the true meaning of Christmas.

Sticking to a budget is very crucial during this time of year. Make sure that all bills are paid before buying lots of gifts. Use credit cards wisely. The average shopper spends around $1,000 for Christmas gifts. It is a great idea to have a list of the items that you plan to purchase so over-spending will not take place. You want to shop early in order to find the best discounts and save money.

The main goal is to make sure that you do not start off the New Year with Christmas debt.

Most people overeat during the holiday season. Holiday stress can cause people to eat more, drink too much, and eat the wrong foods. Keep portion sizes to a minimum by using a small plate. Be very careful of buffet eating. Do not starve yourself in anticipation of the holiday meal because overeating will occur. The five healthy holiday foods consist of pumpkin, cranberries, sweet potatoes, turkey, and green beans so make sure that you do not overlook these nutritional foods. It is important to maintain an exercise routine during the holidays in order to reduce your chance of weight gain, heart attack, or stroke.

This is the time of year to reach out as a family to others in need, sponsor a child for Christmas, or to help serve a meal at a homeless shelter. Charity begins at home. Clean out your closets at home and contribute unused items to shelters. Your items are a blessing to others.

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This is the time of year to make resolutions for the New Year. Make sure your goals are specific, measurable and attainable. Write down your resolutions and tape them in a place where you can see them on a daily basis such as the refrigerator door. Your list may consist of losing weight, to stop smoking, save money, obtain a higher degree, or become closer to our maker. Whatever your goals may be, make sure to stay consistent, disciplined, and focused. If you find that you are not sticking to your resolutions, get back on track and do not become discouraged.

Focus this holiday season on the things that are important. Reflect on the positive things like family and the goals accomplished this year. This is the time of year to reach out as a family to others in need, sponsor a child for Christmas, or to help serve a meal at a homeless shelter. Charity begins at home. Clean out your closets at home and contribute unused items to shelters. Your items are a blessing to others.

The holidays can be stressful so make sure to schedule some “me time.” Take a nap, a warm bubble bath, light some aromatherapy candles, read a book, or jot down thoughts in a journal. This time of year can be overwhelming. Be thankful and grateful that God has allowed you to see another holiday season. I am thankful for my family, my jobs, talents, health, and peace of mind. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!