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Currently Dr. Snipes serves as the Chief Executive Officer and Clinical Director for Dawn-Elise Enterprises, Inc. which has grown over the past few years to include three companies: Affordable Wellness, The Addictions Counseling Alliance and Police-Counseling.com. In addition to her private practice, she has worked for two years as the Clinical Director of a large multi-level substance abuse and mental health treatment facility in Gainesville, Florida.

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*PBA wishes to express appreciation to Dr. Snipes for contributing this helpful column for the benefit of our members.*

# A Public Service Column for Members: A Look At Wellness

## Holiday Survival

The holidays are soon coming. It's a time for toys, a time for beer, a time to re-gift stuff from last year, a time to steal, a time to rob, when will my kids go get a job? Holidays are supposed to be a joyous time to spend with family and reflect on the blessings in our life. Unfortunately, it rarely turns out that way. In our professions, more often than not, this is the busiest season. Here are some tips to make it through the next couple of months....

### Shopping

Start shopping early. Set a goal to have all of your holiday shopping done before Thanksgiving—or at least by December 1, for those of you who insist on going to black Friday. In any event, start now. Make a list tonight of everyone you need to buy gifts for and how much you are able to spend, then start surfing. There are still many sites that offer free or flat-rate shipping and will save you the gas and hassle of going to the store. Amazon.com

for just about anything; Newegg.com and Tigerdirect.com for the techy in your life; Bestnest.com for the birder; and Swallowtailgardens.com and Autumnridgenursery.com for the gardener. Other things that might appeal to kids include the Ranger Rick from the National Wildlife Federation (NWF.org), the Discovery Channel's site (shopping.discovery.com), robot kits, or a family membership to the zoo, Disney or the science museum.

(Zoos and museums often honor family memberships from other affiliated zoos or museums.) Check out AZA.org and astc.org for participating places.) Oh, and if you must go to the store, treat yourself to a smart phone. It makes a world of difference to people who hate standing in line if they have something semi-productive to do.

### Health

Exercise, get enough sleep and drink plenty of water before going to those awesome parties to drink the night away. I will refrain from my soap box here (my holiday gift to you).

### Personal Time

If you are like me, and need your "down time" each day, make sure to get it. Not only will people want to be spending more time with you, but they will expect you to be, well, full of good cheer. It takes a lot out of introverts during the holidays, because there is always something to do, somewhere to go or someone to see. Make your personal time extra special.

### Family

I started to title this "in-laws," then realized that I adore my husband's family...It's my family that stresses me out. In any event, prepare yourself. Find a mantra you can say to get you through such as "It's all good." Heck, I say "God grant me patience" so much my son's bird has started to say it. Remember that most people who are mean are really just jealous or insecure and need to bring you down. It is not worth raising your blood pressure to lower yourself to their level.—It's all good.

### Travel

Plan ahead. That is all I can really say. Well, that and remember to invite the Captain to come with you (Captain Morgan of course).

### Children

Wow. Holidays really bring out the worst in kids. Get 'em good and sugared up, then give them the Toys-R-Us catalog and watch 'em go. We created a gift box in our house. When our son sees something he wants, he writes it on a 3"x5" card and puts it in the box. I don't want to hear about it. If he starts perseverating on a toy, I remind him that there are other, more important, things that he needs to focus on. At holiday time, I take the cards out of the box and go through them with him to find out what he is still interested in.

### Holiday Activities

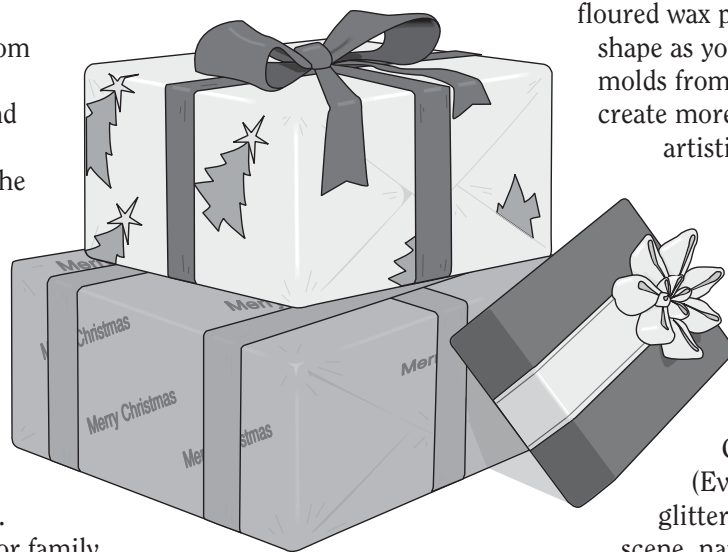
These activities are sure to keep most kids busy for hours. Salt Dough: 4 Cups all purpose flour, 1 cup salt, 1 1/2c. water, rolling pin, cookie/Playdoh cutters and food coloring if you want different colored dough or craft paint and brushes if you want to paint them.

Mix all of the ingredients together, roll out on floured wax paper or a plastic placemat, shape as you like. (You can also use the molds from something like MoonSand to create more 3-D creatures for the less artistic of us.) Place on a

microwave safe plate and nuke it for 2-4 minutes depending on the size of the ornaments. Once they are dry, if you want to paint them, go ahead. You can also give them a light coating of Elmer's

Glue and sprinkle with glitter. (Everything is better with glitter.) Make ornaments, a nativity scene, napkin holders, coin dishes,

candle holders, oh, and presents for each and every reindeer.



### Make wreaths

Although cranberries have gotten too expensive and birds actually don't like popped corn, you can still have fun. In October, the dogwood trees will start to drop their bright red berries. Using picture wire or an old wire clothes hanger, alternate marshmallows and dogwood berries. Tie it up in a wreath and hang it somewhere you can see it. The birds will gobble it up.

### Placemats

You can easily make personalized placemats for any occasion. Get inexpensive white vinyl placemats, some clear contact paper, ribbon, Elmer's Glue, glitter, magazines, markers or crayons, scissors and vinyl letters so your child can add his name. Grown-ups can also do this to with a different selection of decorations—pressed leaves, flower petals, herbs, theater ticket stubs...whatever...it makes a great conversation piece.

*With all of that being said, have a happy holiday and I'll see you next year.* 🍀



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