

Don't let the silly season suck the life out of you this year! Here's how to retain all the energy you need to survive this year's festive season - stress-free!

CREATE A STRESS-FREE SILLY SEASON

ARE YOU FEELING FRUSTRATED, angry, stressed? You probably need to move some energy. Or are you lethargic, tired and suffering from poor self-esteem? If this sounds like you, you probably need to find some energy.

Some people enjoy being stressed and perform at their best when they are. That's okay; for them. Stress is normal and it can serve us well. However, if our stress levels start to create chronic symptoms of 'dis-ease', then we need to take action to ensure they don't persist for the long term.

This silly season, how would you like to:

- + stay fit
- + become fit
- + improve your health?



If your answer is 'yes' to any of these goals, then forget about waiting for the New Year to commit to the resolution; instead, start looking after yourself right now and you'll find that this festive season may well be your best ever!

The bottom line is, when you feel fit, healthy and happy, you are more likely to deal with stress more easily and effectively.

Winston Churchill said 'attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference'. How right he was.

With this in mind, here's how you can enjoy a stress-free silly season in just three steps, as simple as ABC!

Step 1. A = Accept

Firstly, accept the situation you are in. Acknowledge that you are stressed and admit that you're tired, stressed, frustrated and worn out.

Step 2. B = Breathe

Take a deep breath and when you breathe out, release the tension and relax your body. This is the space you should be in, when you need to make choices or decisions.

Step 3. C = Change

Choose to change your mind, change your thoughts, change your ideas, change your attitude, change something! The reason being, a simple change of focus can turn around years of neglect. Pat Mesiti, author of *Millionaire Mindset* said 'What you focus on will progress, what you neglect will regress.'

CHANGE YOUR MIND – TODAY!

Embrace the following affirmations (or make up your own to suit your individual goals), and say them as often as possible:

TOP 5 SILLY SEASON ORGANISING TIPS

1 Send your Christmas cards early. The sooner you do, the sooner it's done!

2 Need the perfect party frock? Sort through your wardrobe first and you might find the perfect outfit you forgot you had!

3 Christmas is all about giving. Gather up any unwanted items that are in good condition and deliver them to your local charity store or donation bin.

4 Sort through last year's Christmas decorations before hitting the shops. Toss any broken or unwanted decorations, donate the good quality items and decide what to keep.

5 Instead of giving your loved ones more unnecessary 'stuff', consider buying an Oxfam Unwrapped Gift in their name, such as a duck, bridge or fruit tree for a needy community. Visit www.oxfamunwrapped.com.au for details.

KAT TATE

Kat is a self-confessed de-clutter queen and director of Kat & Kaboodle professional organisers. She helps busy professionals and families to organise their homes, offices and lives with hands-on help and virtual organising. Visit www.katandkaboodle.com.au for more information.

- ✦ 'I will get fit starting right now'
- ✦ 'I will put fitness first on my life of priorities'
- ✦ 'I direct my energy into exercise with vigour and passion'
- ✦ 'I feel alive and energised after every fitness class and workout session'
- ✦ 'I love keeping my body in good health'
- ✦ 'I love keeping my mind in good health'

It's a great idea to write your affirmations on sticky notes, and put them up throughout your house. For example, you could put them on your bathroom mirror, your fridge door, on the back of the door as you exit your house; all the places that you will see on a very regular basis. And every time you see it posted up there, say the affirmation aloud.

What will happen may astound you. Because when you choose to focus on fitness and put your fitness first, a change in your health will happen. This is because the law of attraction states that you will receive what you focus on.

Of course, if your desire to become healthier doesn't drive you to change, then often a health crisis will. Many people become sick because they neglect their bodies by smoking, eating poorly, not getting enough sleep or holding onto stress. If this sounds like familiar behaviour – especially during a typical festive season, such as the one coming up – then right now is the best time to take action.



OTi Organisers are the answer to a stress-free 2010! With features including a compact A5 design, 'to do' lists, space for menu and exercise planning, a place to plan your

events and entertaining, a central location to record contacts and important numbers, plus all your usernames and passwords, all OTi organisers also come with Forest Stewardship Council accreditation, confirming they are made from sustainable materials and

are environmentally-friendly. Valued at \$35.99 and available from www.oti.net.au you can win your very own, by emailing 50 words or less to editor@fitnessfirst.com.au before 4 December, telling us why you desperately need an OTi organiser in 2010.



GUILTY PLEASURES: HOW TO HAVE YOUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO

IF YOU...	TO BURN IT OFF YOU COULD
Eat a medium slice of Christmas pudding, served with custard and a full cream milk cappuccino	Do a one-hour circuit class
Eat a roasted Christmas meal of turkey and vegetables	Do a one-hour indoor cycle class
Eat a slice of ice-cream cake, Christmas shortbread and chocolates for dessert	Do a 45-minute step class
Drink 6 or more 250ml sized beers at your Christmas party	Do a one-hour boot camp session

To achieve the goal you identified earlier, you will need to make some changes. The great news is, change takes only a little effort. Here's what you need to do:

- ✦ **Make a start today. That means changing the way you think and behave.**
- ✦ **Realise that you are in charge of your life, your thoughts and your beliefs.**
- ✦ **Take a small step each day, and always put your fitness first.**
- ✦ **Be open to new opportunities, new ideas and new friends.**

Everyone is different so choose a fitness routine that you love and enjoy, that interests you and inspires you. A great motivator can be to try something you've always wanted to, but never have; for instance training for an up and coming event, Pilates, boot camp or personal training. Whatever you choose, remember your body is a temple, and you should look after it. Eat nourishing food, enjoy feeling supercharged and stress-free, especially right after a workout.

By embracing these ABCs during the festive season, you will not only create a stress-free silly season, but you could also come out of it in even better shape than you began in!

Good luck!

Tracey Stranger, BAppSc (Microbiology)

Tracey is a health writer and an author. She is passionate about helping people be the best they can be in health, wealth and happiness. Tracey's book *How to Overcome Stress Naturally* is published by Global Publishing Group, distributed by Dennis Jones and Associates and is available nationally through all good book stores. Contact Tracey by phoning 0409 879 271, emailing inspire@traceystranger.com or visit www.HowToOvercomeStressNaturally.com

WIN SOME PEACE, AMIDST THE CRAZINESS!

IN A WORLD OF BUSY and particularly during the craziest time of the year, we can appreciate Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat as a destination to inspire you to live a healthier and more stress-free life. Surrounded by ocean and valley views in the Gold Coast hinterland, packages are fully inclusive of all organic meals and snacks, accommodation, activities and seminars and selected spa treatments. In addition, you'll connect with supportive professionals who will teach you resilience in the modern world; and you'll enjoy Gwinganna's superb cuisine, which is all certified organic and partially supplied from the on-site gardens. Every afternoon you'll indulge in Dreamtime, enabling you to experience the stunning Spa Sanctuary, one of the largest spas in the Southern hemisphere, featuring over 30 treatment rooms and suites, including a beautiful crystal steamroom and several lounge and relaxation areas. To see the full range of retreats and dates or to find out more about Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat, visit www.gwinganna.com

THE BEST PART? To help you minimise the silly in this year's silly season, you can win a two-night Gwinganna Weekend package for two people, in double share Heritage accommodation, valued at \$1,660*.

THIS PRIZE* INCLUDES:

- ✦ 2 nights double share Heritage accommodation
- ✦ All organic meals and snacks daily

- ✦ Access to all facilities and all scheduled activities
- ✦ \$100 spa credit per person
- ✦ Complimentary transfers, at set times, from Gold Coast Airport.

TO ENTER: Email 50 words or less to editor@fitnessfirst.com.au before 4 December, explaining why you want to win a weekend at Gwinganna Healthy Lifestyle Retreat. If your entry is deemed the most creative or persuasive you'll win!

***Conditions apply.** The prize redemption is subject to availability. Bookings should be made at least 45 days in advance. This prize may not be combined with any other voucher or offer. The prize is valid until 30 June 2010, but is not available between 17 December 2009 and 17 January 2010. This prize is not transferable and is not redeemable for cash. The prize is only available to residents of Australia aged 16 years and older.



WIN A BUTLER! A handbag butler that is...



THE ULTIMATE IN ORGANISATION is the Handbag Butler; a chic, foldable hanger that can be attached to a table top to keep your handbag out of harm's way, giving you the freedom to dine in style. The Handbag Butler has become a hit among arm candy connoisseurs across Australia, Japan, Indonesia and New Caledonia. And with 25 unique product styles, there's a Handbag Butler to suit every handbag, outfit or occasion. Available from just \$29.95 visit www.handbagbutler.com.au for information and stockists.

Or to win a Handbag Butler email 50 words or less to editor@fitnessfirst.com.au before 4 December and tell us why you really really need one. The most convincing entries will win!