**Tips to Avoid Stress Eating During the Holidays**

Do you tend to overdo it with stress eating during the holidays? Here are some quick tips to enjoy holiday meals without the stress.

- Whether you are hosting/cooking or not, **eat lightly** during the day and go to dinner with only a small appetite.
- **Take it easy** on the appetizers and alcohol before the meal.
- Enjoy and **appreciate** the company of family and friends being together.
- Stand back and take in the entire scene - **give thanks** for the time and effort that it took to prepare it.
- Think about what you're **most hungry for**, rather than randomly eating food 'because it's there.'
- Imagine yourself leaving food on your plate and pushing away from the table, **feeling satisfied** and 'just right'.
- **Begin with the end in mind**: imagine how you want to feel when leaving the gathering (or when everyone goes home) and visualize yourself savoring the food and eating in a way that leads to that feeling.

**Strategies to help manage stress, overwhelm, and the holi-'daze'**

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule.
- Exercise or enjoy pleasurable movement regularly.
- Keep a gratitude journal, either written or by mindfully noticing throughout your day.
- Stay hydrated. Some symptoms of dehydration include brain fog, afternoon fatigue, focus issues, depression, anger, exhaustion, headaches, sleep issues, stress, and a lack of mental clarity and acuity.
- Relax into the NOW moment: deep breath, relax jaw, shoulders sink into torso, belly softens
- Manage your inner chatter and reframe negative self-talk:
  a) "I should, must, ought, have to" becomes "I could".
  b) Change the delivery system: tempo / sound / volume / location.
  c) Leave your mind and come to your senses.
  d) Rather than saying, "This is terrible," instead say, "This is good because ___________."
  e) Redirect inner awareness to your **personal positive statement**: ____________________________