

How can Moms successfully survive the insanity of this time of year?

We are experts at making excuses for not taking care of ourselves. We manage to find time for something we have to do for someone else. We are responsible to others for everything and anything, but when are we accountable to ourselves?

This season can be different if you design a plan with specific goals and strategies that will help you stay calm, focused and on-track through the holidays and even into 2007.

I am not suggesting that you drop everything, disregard the needs of your family and run off to a spa - not at all - let's be real. However, you can approach the season with a little different outlook.



a HOLIDAY survival PLAN

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Last spring, did you promise yourself that you would begin a routine of regular exercise in the morning? Did you put it on your calendar or just talk about it? What did you say? Who was listening?

Did you promise yourself you would cut out the not-so-wonderful foods, which of course, you were just noshing? Did it happen or did you resort to the oath of procrastination? *"I promise I will start tomorrow."*

In my coaching practice, the hot topic for many women is dealing with the inner turmoil of why we get derailed and how to head it off. It is as though we are terrified to break the daily routine, to take care of ourselves; for fear that the home/work/school world will simply fall apart.

Wake-up call, Moms, is time really the answer? Not always, yet it is at the top of our excuse list for not accomplishing our wellness goals.

We spend a large amount of energy trying to control everything that there is little left over for us. This pool of energy will increase and be available to us if we can regain that feeling of being on-track and on top of our personal wellness.

Surviving the holiday season and keeping your body's health and wellness on target are much easier to do with a documented wellness plan.

A personal story

This past August I became an empty-nest Mom. I anticipated being teary-eyed as I said, "Good-bye" to my youngest of two sons, but deep down inside I saw a

flip side to this picture; I visualized life calmer with so much more free time to get things done. I imagined that with both my sons in college, happy and doing well, I could focus on me. I'd have time for both personal and professional projects that I had put on the back burner knowing that it could wait. Does this sound like something you'd say? "When I have more time."

Fast forward into my new lifestyle and guess what, it isn't as easy as I anticipated. I thought extra time was all I needed and I would be magically motivated – time to re-plan and think again.

I found I needed a plan. I sat down to write out my goals, my strategies and take a good look at where I wanted to be in this new stage of life. This kind of planning is a wonderfully empowering exercise.

A simple tool that works for me is a neon yellow sticky pad that has at the top "Today, I will..." I use the pad daily, to write down my intentions and my goals in the morning and put these notes in prominent places to give myself visual reminders. [If you'd like to try this note pad, I'd be happy to send it to you, *free*. Simply email me at www.RisaClassicCoach.com.]

Using this note pad is one of my favorite personal strategies. Doing this helps me stay focused on a daily basis. Within your plan you will come up with what works for you based on your personal goals and needs.

Feeling a sense of accomplishment and empowerment at the end of a busy day is very restful and satisfying, a feeling that fuels you for the next busy day and keeps you on-track. If you think you are going to get everything on your list done in one day, please re-think and re-plan.

When I work with clients to design their wellness goals, women tend to overschedule and underestimate the time each activity will take. Let's be honest, we

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ENROLL TODAY!

Even reading the list of all these things is tiring in and of itself. So, why not trim the “I will” list just a smidge and be OK with it. Call a friend and go out for a thirty minute brisk walk. When you get home lie down, put your feet up on a chair and take ten deep slow breaths, with full body stretches. Now, go back to your “I will” list more relaxed and focused.

Risa's Guide to Creating a Wellness Plan:

- Identify your needs and values. What do you really want?
- Think about and write down what might get in your way.
- Mentally let go of the tasks that can wait; they will still be there later.
- Engage the support of others when possible and as needed.
- Enjoy and appreciate your successes. Be your own best friend.
- Under-promise and over-deliver to both yourself and others.
- Prioritize and layout your time; be clear about how much time you really need to do each task or activity. ■

Risa Olinsky is a certified wellness coach, personal fitness trainer and lifestyle and weight management consultant with a Masters degree in Adult Fitness Management from NYU. She lives in Maplewood, NJ with her husband and two college-age sons. For more information on Risa visit www.RisaClassicCoach.com

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Featured Businesswoman Paula Ivins Kingston

Paula Ivins Kingston, a third generation hair stylist and mother of four, opened lucid, a New York City-style boutique salon in October 2005. She is the granddaughter of Ada Schuh who operated Ada's Beauty Shop in downtown Lebanon in the mid-1950s and the niece of Michael Schuh, owner of Michael's Salon and Day Spa in Centerville. Kingston worked as a global educator for the Aveda Corporation and

salon director for the Oscar Bond Salon. This New York City-based salon has been seen on Bravo's *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* and MTV's *Fashion Emergency*.

Kingston who still services clients in the Big Apple one week each month wanted to bring the best of the New York City experience to Lebanon.

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