



Customer Service Notes for Dealing with Holiday Stress



We know that with the holidays coming, this can be a time of increased stress for co-workers and participants. To ensure that you continue to deliver stellar service to your colleagues and participants, it is important that you recognize that people may be overly stressed at this time of year. It is also critical that you not become overly stressed yourself.

Be on the lookout for the following signs that your co-workers or participants may be stressed:

- Frustration
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Forgetfulness

Try to be extra patient in your interactions with participants. If you find a participant to be irritable, don't take it personally. Even if the person is unpleasant, avoid reacting in a negative way.

Recognize that participants may be stressed because of feeling rushed to accomplish tasks associated with the holidays. An otherwise engaged participant may appear aloof and disinterested in your nutritional counseling.

Your co-workers may also be dealing with some of the same stressors as the participants. When possible, lend a hand to a co-worker who seems stressed. She will appreciate it and may reciprocate when you are stressed. Try to add some holiday spirit or fun to the workplace to alleviate the stress. Any of the following may help:

- Holiday cookies
- Collecting clothes for those in need
- Chipping in to buy a present for a child who otherwise would not receive one
- Having a staff holiday luncheon

Remember, you've made it through the holiday stress of previous years and can do so again!

Questions for Reflection:

1. Are you aware of your stress signals? Are there coping techniques that work for you?
2. Can you tell when a co-worker or participant seems overly stressed?
3. What can you do to demonstrate patience with participants who are stressed around the holidays?

