

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:
Rebecca Murphy, Publicist
404.754.7844
Rebecca@stressinstitute.com

STRESS PROOF YOUR HOLIDAYS

ATLANTA, September 26, 2006- The greatest challenge of the holiday season is staying balanced. From gift giving and parties to in-laws and traveling, stress is inextricably woven into the holiday celebration.

Dr. Kathleen Hall, an internationally recognized stress management and work-life balance expert identifies the main trigger points of stress and offers practical advice to enjoy the holiday season.

Finances

Finances are the number one concern. Three out of four Americans overspend during this time of the year.

- Create a budget and stick to it. There will be less unexpected expenses during the holidays.
- Create a unique gift list. Instead of fighting mall traffic or last minute gifts, shop online all year-round to watch for clearances and sales. Buy gift certificates, spa vouchers, or give money to the recipient's favorite charity in their name.

Travel

Unpredictable weather, overcrowded airports, and unreliable transportation can all lead to stress and exhaustion.

- Memorize stress reduction techniques, and teach them to others.
- Be sure to nurture yourself. Take along a favorite blanket, music, or DVD for comfort.
- Most airports have a variety of places to buy food. Make wise food choices to lower stress levels that include omega 3's, vitamin B, and spicy foods. Eating high fat, greasy foods can make you anxious and feel stressed out.
- Keep moving. Walk up and down the concourse, or do yoga stretches. This produces endorphins, calming hormones in the brain.
- If possible, check in before you get to the airport through the airline website.
- If traveling with children, make a list of items they want to take with them, and place them in a backpack. Always pack an extra change of clothes for your children.
- Surrender. Reacting to every obstacle will raise your blood pressure and your heart rate. Surrender to your holiday travel as a classroom, and learn.

Family

For many of us, the holidays are the only time of the year to spend time with family members. Make sure to make the most of this quality time.

- A few months prior to the holidays, create a family email list or newsletter. This is an easy way to keep up with busy calendars.
- Make sure your family knows what to bring during an extended stay. For example: notes on food allergies.
- Place disposable cameras around the house. This takes the pressure off one person to capture all the memories.
- Plan shopping trips around your child's "up" time, and carry plenty of snacks.

- Enjoy the old, open up the new: Keep old family traditions, but make a special attempt to start creative new traditions with family and friends.

Depression

The holiday season can contribute to feelings of being overwhelmed, and can possibly lead to depression.

- “Helpers High”. Volunteering is an instant pick me up. Meeting like minded people while helping those in need improves your health.
- Contact an out-of-touch relative, friend or old neighbor.
- Try something new during this time. A new type of food, decorate in new colors.

Weight Gain

This is a time to make memories, and to gather with friends and family. Food is a gift to be enjoyed and shared.

- Set an amount of parties to attend. The day of the party, eat two light meals, so the major part of your daily intake will be at the celebration.
- Eat what you love, keep the proportion down. Keep a heavy amount of fruits and vegetables in your diet, but never skip out on food that makes you happy.
- Try to limit alcohol and carbohydrate consumption, which can increase your stress response. Drink sparkling water with a lime to fill your stomach and create a sense of fullness.

Dr. Kathleen Hall

Dr. Kathleen Hall, an internationally recognized stress and work-life balance expert, is the Founder and Director of The Stress Institute. She has been featured on all major television networks including NBC’s Today Show, FOX, and CNN, as well as other reliable media outlets such as Good Morning America Radio, ESPN.com, USA Today, Fortune, Redbook, and Real Simple. Author of *A Life in Balance: Nourishing the Four Roots of True Happiness* (AMACOM, January 2006) and *Alter Your Life: Overbooked? Overworked? Overwhelmed?* (Oak Haven, April 2005), she offers simple methods for reducing stress and living a balanced life of true happiness. For more information about Dr. Hall, and The Stress Institute, please visit www.drkathleenhall.com.

###

For more tips on how to beat holiday stress, or to set up an interview with Dr. Kathleen Hall, please contact:

Rebecca Murphy

Publicist, Dr. Kathleen Hall & The Stress Institute
404.754.7844- Media Cell
Rebecca@stressinstitute.com