

Hey there, beautiful! 🌈 Before you dive in, a quick heads-up: this transcript is a super close-to-verbatim buddy from our podcast, but it's got its quirks! We didn't call the grammar cops on it, so you might bump into a typo or two. But hey, that just adds character, right? 😊 Embrace the wild side of language and enjoy the read! Happy exploring! 🚀



PEACE During the Holidays? It's Easier Than You Think!

The Holiday Chaos

Carmen Hecox: The other day, my husband and I saw this sign posted in someone's yard, and it suddenly hit me, the holiday chaos is around us, and my heart began to race. It's easy to feel overwhelmed and lose your cool. But what if I told you there's a way to find your calmness in the midst of all this madness?

The Reality of Holiday Stress

Carmen Hecox: The holiday season is supposed to be a time of love, joy, family, friends, and giving. But let's be real, it can also be a time of stress, anxiety, and exhaustion. Between the constant streams of ads, to-do lists, and the pressure of making everything perfect? No wonder we often find ourselves feeling like we're stuck in a whirlwind with no escape.

I mean, think about it - the holidays are supposed to be a time for relaxation and celebration, but in reality, they often end up being a time of overwhelm and burnout. We're expected to host perfect dinners, buy thoughtful gifts, and attend endless gatherings, all while maintaining our own regular schedules and responsibilities. It's enough to make anyone feel like they're going crazy.

Finding Calm Amidst the Madness

Carmen Hecox: But what if I told you it doesn't have to be that way? What if you could find a way to rise above the chaos and find peace even in the midst of all the holiday madness?

Gift shopping, for instance, can be a major source of stress during the holidays, we feel pressure to find the perfect gift for each person on our list and the crowds, the lines, the endless decisions it's enough to drive anyone mad. And then there's the family gatherings, which can be a minefield of conflicting personalities, differing opinions and old rivalries. Not to mention the travel, the traffic, the delays - it's a wonder we make it through the holiday season with our sanity intact.

The constant pressure to be social, to be cheerful, to be "on" all the time can be exhausting and it's easy to feel like we're losing ourselves in the process. We start to feel like we're just going through the motions, rather than just truly living and enjoying the holiday season.

And to add the pressure to cook the perfect meal, to decorate the perfect tree, to host the perfect party, and it's no wonder we feel like we're drowning in the sea of expectations and responsibilities. And let's not even get started on the comparison - comparisons to others, comparisons to ourselves, comparisons to some idealization version of the holiday season that we've seen on those Hallmark Christmas movies or social media.

It's enough to make anyone feel like they're not good enough, like they're not doing enough, like they're just not enough, period. But here's the thing - it's all just noise, noise that we can tune out if we choose to. We can choose to focus on what really matters - love, connection, community, rather than getting caught up in the external traps of the holiday season.

Mindfulness and Self-Care Tips

Carmen Hecox: One way to do this is to focus on mindfulness - being present in the moment, rather than getting caught up in all the future or dwelling in the past. We can practice mindfulness by taking a few deep breaths, by noticing sights and sounds around us, by focusing on the sensation in our bodies. We can practice mindfulness by setting aside our to-do list and simply being rather than constantly doing. If you live in an area where there's a Christmas light show, or you have a neighbor like my husband who creates a Christmas light show for everyone to enjoy, go out and indulge yourself.

Another way to find peace during the holidays is to prioritize self-care. Take time for ourselves rather than constantly putting others first. It might mean taking a long bath, reading a book, going for a walk, or simply enjoying a quiet cup of coffee. Or

perhaps you can give yourself an early gift, like a day at the spa or finally scheduling that must needed one hour massage. It might mean saying no to one or two commitments and saying yes to ourselves instead.

We can also find peace by setting boundaries - not overcommitting ourselves, not taking on too much, not trying to be everything to everyone. I know as a mom, and as a woman, our superpower is helping others and failing to ask for help when needed. We can find peace by being honest about our limitations, by asking for help when it's needed, by recognizing that we can't do it all alone.

And finally, we can find peace by redefining what the holiday season means to us - by focusing on the things that truly matter, that truly brings us joy, rather than getting caught up in the external expectations and pressures.

Personal Reflection and Redefining the Holidays

Carmen Hecox: I'd like you to close your eyes, take a deep breath. Now, reflect to a time in your life when life was easier and stress free. Or a time when you used to look forward to the holidays. What was it about that time that made this time, something to look forward to? What can you do right now to bring back that feeling of joy and pleasure that used to make the holidays special?

I know as we go through life's twists and turns, we begin to stray away from what the holidays truly means. And I know we all have different opinions about what brings us joy and what the holidays should be. But I think we can all agree that what makes this season special is when we can focus on love, on connections, on community, rather than getting caught up in the commercialism and materialism of the season.

A Personal Story of Overcoming Holiday Stress

Carmen Hecox: I remember one holiday season in particular. I was feeling completely overwhelmed. I was hosting a big dinner and I was in charge of the cooking, decorating, and entertaining. All while dealing with a challenging family

dynamic. I was feeling like I was going to lose my mind. Like I was drowning in the sea of responsibility.

But then I took a step back and I realized that I had a choice. I could choose to let my stress and anxiety consume me, or I could choose to take a deep breath to prioritize my own well-being and focus on what truly mattered. I chose the latter, and it was like a weight was lifted off my shoulders.

I started by taking a few moments to myself each day - just a few moments to breathe, to relax, to recharge. I prioritized my own self-care rather than putting everyone else's needs first. And I redefined what the holiday season meant to me. Focusing on love, connection, and community rather than getting caught up in the external trappings of the season.

It wasn't easy, and it didn't change everything overnight. But it was a start, and it was a powerful reminder that I have the power to choose how I experience the holiday season. I can choose to let the stress and anxiety consume me, or I can choose to find peace, my calm, and my center.

Final Thoughts and Challenge

Carmen Hecox: So, I want to leave you with a challenge today - to find your own way to rise above the chaos of the holiday season. To find your own way to prioritize your own well-being, to focus on what truly matters and to redefine what the holiday season means to you.

Remember, it's not about being perfect. It's not about doing it all. And it's not about meeting everyone else's expectations. It's about finding your own peace, your own calm, and your own center - even in the midst of the holiday madness.

Closing Remarks and Upcoming Guest

Carmen Hecox: If you have any tips for staying calm during the holiday season, please share them in the comments below. If you'd like more information or a copy of today's transcript, you can find them at createthebestme.com/ep091.

And don't forget to come back next week as our guest will be Anne-Sophie Reinhardt, who will talk about loving and accepting your body and having a

healthy relationship with food. Trust me, Anne-Sophie is truly an inspiration that you won't want to miss. Thank you for watching. Catch you next week. Bye for now.