



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## TIME AND MONEY WORRIES GIVE WAY TO HOLIDAY STRESS

### *APA and South Carolina Psychological Association (SCPA) Offer Strategies to Minimize Holiday Stress*

**Charleston, SC, November 12, 2013** — The holiday season can bring added stress to the many Americans who already experience high stress throughout the year. Money, in particular, can be a cause of stress, as people feel demands to purchase gifts, prepare decadent meals and spend money entertaining or traveling to visit family. The American Psychological Association's (APA) Stress in America™ survey has repeatedly found that money is a significant stressor for many Americans, and it is important to recognize its heightened effect during the holidays.

"The holidays can be a stressful time for everyone, but there are some steps you can take to help manage your stress," Dr. Jeannine Monnier, SCPA President-Elect, said. "You can begin by developing a simple approach that helps you set realistic goals. Then, be sure to make time to relax and enjoy low-key celebrations with good friends and family."

APA and SCPA suggest the following strategies to help manage your holiday stress:

- **Reframe.** Refocus the holiday season on spending time with loved ones by creating a realistic budget for gifts and reminding your children that the holidays aren't about expensive toys. This reframing can help you better manage your spending stress and redefine the celebration around what's truly important.
- **Volunteer.** Make the primary focal point of the holiday about helping others in need. Go to a local charity, such as a soup kitchen or a shelter, where you and your loved ones can volunteer together during the holidays and throughout the year. Helping others can put your challenges in perspective and build stronger community relationships.
- **Be active.** No matter where you live or the weather, going for a family walk will help manage your stress and perhaps start a free and fun holiday tradition. South Carolina's mild winters allow for plenty of opportunities to bundle up and enjoy the outdoors. Many local parks and community centers have holiday activities for the family, which can keep your family active and away from the constant temptations of fattening foods and expensive gifts that appear around the holidays.
- **Take time for yourself.** Taking care of yourself helps you to take better care of others in your life. Go for a long walk, take a needed nap, relax by reading something that interests you or listen to your favorite music. By slowing down you may find you have a better outlook on the season and more energy to accomplish your holiday goals.
- **Seek support.** Talk about stress related to money and the holidays with your friends and family whom you trust. Getting things out in the open can help you navigate your feelings and work toward a solution. If you continue to feel overwhelmed, consider talking with a psychologist, who can help you develop

strategies to better manage your stress. A psychologist has the skills and professional training to help people learn to manage stress and cope more effectively with life's problems.

For additional information on stress and lifestyle and behavior, visit [www.apa.org/helpcenter](http://www.apa.org/helpcenter), read the blog [www.yourmindyourbody.org](http://www.yourmindyourbody.org) and follow @apahelpcenter on Twitter. To find out more about the South Carolina Psychological Association, visit [www.scpsychology.com](http://www.scpsychology.com) and follow us on Twitter at @SCPsychological.

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*South Carolina Psychological Association is the only professional organization in South Carolina representing all areas of psychology: academic, practitioner, public service, and students. As a 501 (c)(6) professional association that represents the professionals of psychology in South Carolina, South Carolina Psychological Association has the purpose to advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare; to foster and maintain high standards of practice, teaching, and research in the field of psychology; and to make available to the public information regarding psychology as a science and as a profession.*

*The American Psychological Association, in Washington, D.C., is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States. APA's membership includes more than 134,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students. Through its divisions in 54 subfields of psychology and affiliations with 60 state, territorial and Canadian provincial associations, APA works to advance the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives.*