

How You Can Reduce Your Stress This Christmas Season

When we think of Christmas, we often think of the stress involved. As women, what can we do about stress, particularly at this time of year?

Psychologist and life coach Dr. Barbara Lowe has some words of wisdom, and she shares them on *Dr. Barbara's Whole Life Podcast* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "You need to be taking care of yourself," she says. "Often as women, we are caretakers, or we put ourselves in that role. ... But sometimes we're so busy watering everyone else's garden that our own garden is dry, that our own garden is not taken care of; it's wilting. And you are the one, my friend, who needs to water your own garden."

"Some of you are in caretaking positions, you're a pastor or a nurse or a teacher or a high-powered executive, but you're still taking care of everyone," Lowe says. "Take time also to take care of you! God wants you to water your own garden; you need to do some self-care."

But what does this look like? Lowe discusses the basics including sleep, proper nutrition and limiting alcohol use. But she also suggests another healthy suggestion: saying no.

"The holidays do require doing more: We're visiting more, we're on the go more. Some of us are cooking more, wrapping presents—it can stretch us financially. And so I do want to encourage you that you can be all—but not all at once. ... We need to pick and choose where we're going to invest. It's OK just to be OK in some areas!

Lowe adds, "It's impossible to be an excellent cook, an excellent decorator, an excellent mom, an excellent friend, an excellent employee. In all circumstances, we have to learn to

compromise. Sometimes, we need to take the foot off the gas here, so we can turn in this [other] direction. We've got to—and I'm giving you permission."

For more of Dr. Barbara's tips on surviving the holidays with less stress and struggle, listen to this podcast.