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EVAN W. SMITH
Funeral Services

BULLETIN

Articles of Help & Healing for our Delaware Community



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We hope you enjoy this issue of our quarterly "Bulletin." Be sure to subscribe to our email list so you get monthly articles and announcements as well.

Thank you and God bless.

- Evan W. Smith

When You're Coping with Grief, New Traditions Can Bring Comfort

When mourning the loss of a loved one, the same holiday traditions that once brought joy can become difficult reminders. Whether your loss was recent or some time ago, the holidays are filled with memories that can make missing them feel fresh again. Maintaining those storied customs can be one way to celebrate your memories, but starting new family traditions offers another way for you and your family members to look forward to the holiday season. Here are six clever ways to include new traditions in your holiday plans:



- 1. Switch up your Christmas day menu.** While holiday feasts just wouldn't be the same without your family's time-honored secret recipes, other parts of the meal might be up for a twist. One fun way to do this is to offer a dessert bar filled with tasty treats created by your guests. In advance of your gathering, ask each person to bring their favorite holiday-themed dessert.
- 2. Visit a tree farm.** If you've always had an artificial tree or bought a live one from a local vendor, why not try something new this year? Start your family's new holiday festivities off right by bundling up and heading to a local Christmas tree farm to search for the perfect tree. Aside from getting out in the fresh air and enjoying the beauty of nature, many tree farms offer hayrides, sleigh rides, oversized gingerbread houses, and other family-friendly activities. You might even see Santa there!
- 3. Share memories of your loved one.** Hang a special Christmas stocking in which family and friends can place written stories of fond memories of the departed. Read them aloud when you gather with loved ones on Christmas morning.
- 4. Embrace remembrance ornaments and trees.** Buy a new ornament every year that reminds you of your loved one. This might be an ornament that you think is pretty, a photo decoration, or an ornament that symbolizes something about your loved one. You could also buy a small tree that's just for these remembrance ornaments. This will give everyone an opportunity to view the ornaments all together and reminisce.
- 5. Give back.** Strive to make the lives of others merry and bright during the Christmas season. Volunteer at your local homeless shelter, soup kitchen, animal shelter, or senior living community. Or, send supplies and greeting cards to soldiers stationed abroad who are away from their families for the holidays.
- 6. Incorporate a new cultural tradition.** Broaden your family's cultural awareness and spice up a typical holiday celebration with traditions from around the world. You might look to your own roots for inspiration or explore a culture that has always fascinated you. It can be as simple as teaching the kids how to say "happy holidays" in another language or as elaborate as fixing a traditional holiday feast from across the globe.

Although it can be hard to change long-standing family traditions, being together and at peace should be your priority. With a little planning, you can devise new ways to celebrate and enjoy the holiday season while fondly remembering your loved one.

Keep the Holidays Merry with These Ingenious Ingredient Substitutions

Amid inflation and supply chain issues, preparing those traditional holiday feasts and delectable treats may require some creativity.

Having a backup plan is the key to stress-free cooking. Keep this list of ingredient substitutions handy to ensure that your holiday meals remain merry and delicious.

Meats and cheeses

Swapping the type of meat or cheese used can slightly change the flavor of a dish, but these alternatives will still bring delicious results.

- **Roast Turkey:** Serve a whole roasted chicken or Cornish hen for small gatherings. Or, buy individual turkey parts.
- **Chicken Breast:** Use other lean, mild meats like turkey cutlets or boneless pork chops.
- **Ground Beef:** Sauté finely diced mushrooms with beef bouillon (about one crushed cube per pound of mushrooms).
- **Italian Sausage:** Season any ground meat with dried Italian spices like fennel, garlic powder, and oregano.
- **Bacon:** Try other cured pork like salami or prosciutto seasoned with smoked paprika to mimic the smoky flavor.
- **Stew Meats:** Cubed beef chuck, pork butt, and lamb shoulder can be used interchangeably in braises and stews.
- **Salmon:** Swap with other firm, fatty fillets like tuna, cod, mahi-mahi, or swordfish.
- **Pepper Jack:** Season Monterey Jack or white cheddar cheese with red pepper flakes.
- **Parmesan:** Toss Romano cheese with toasted bread crumbs for a salty, nutty finish.
- **Ricotta:** Pulse cottage cheese in the food processor for a smoother texture.

Baking

When an essential ingredient can't be found, rely on these clever substitutions.

- **All-Purpose Flour:** Combine equal parts cake flour and bread flour for a similar texture.
- **Baking Powder:** Mix baking soda with a pinch of cream of tartar or a squeeze of lemon juice.
- **Butter:** Try applesauce or pureed avocado instead. The results will be slightly denser but still delicious.
- **Vanilla Extract:** Use an equal amount of maple syrup.
- **Brown Sugar:** Beat granulated sugar with molasses or honey (about 1 tablespoon per cup of sugar).
- **Eggs:** Use 1 tablespoon of mayonnaise for every egg in recipes for baked goods.
- **Oils:** Neutral oils like canola, coconut, corn, peanut, and vegetable are interchangeable. For olive oil, swap with avocado, sesame, or sunflower oil.
- **Cocoa Powder:** Swap with hot chocolate mix, but then cut back on the sugar in the recipe since it's already sweetened.
- **Buttermilk:** Mix whole milk with a splash of lemon juice or white vinegar. Let sit for 15 minutes before using.
- **Sour Cream:** Use Greek yogurt or mascarpone.

Produce

Many fresh vegetables have similar flavors and moisture content, making them easy to replace.

- **Onions:** When sautéed, red, yellow, and white onions are interchangeable. Scallions and shallots work too.

- **Fresh Garlic:** Use 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder for each clove called for in a recipe.
- **Shallots:** Swap an equal amount of minced red onion that's been briefly soaked in water to mellow the flavor.
- **Arugula:** Season baby spinach leaves with black pepper to mimic the subtle spice of the greens.
- **Greens:** Swap kale, collard greens, escarole, and Swiss chard for one another in cooked dishes.
- **Potatoes:** Look to other firm root vegetables like parsnips, carrots, turnips, butternut squash, and sweet potatoes.

Pantry Items

Cupboard staple substitutions like the ones below deliver plenty of flavor and zest.

- **Broth or Stock:** Season water with a tasty alternative liquid flavoring—white wine, beer, and soy sauce all work well.
- **Bread Crumbs:** Use crushed potato chips or crackers. Cut back on the salt though, since these substitutes contain more sodium.
- **Vinegar:** Substitute jarred pickle juice to add tang to dressings and sauces.
- **Wine:** Mix 1 cup broth (beef for red wine; chicken for white wine) with 2 teaspoons of lemon juice.
- **Warm Spices:** Swap cinnamon, cloves, or nutmeg (or a combination) for pumpkin pie spice.
- **Dried Herbs:** Use fresh herbs but since their flavor is less potent, use three times the amount.

Have a New Prescription? Here's What to Ask Your Physician

Being informed about the drugs you're taking is an important part of managing your health care. Any time your provider writes a new prescription for you, there are some questions you should ask before agreeing to take it. By doing so, you will not only better understand the medication and how to use it, but you also will learn why it's necessary and what to expect. Here are six important questions to ask whenever your physician prescribes a new medication.

What are the common side effects? It's important to know what to expect with a new medication. That way, you can consider whether enduring them is worth whatever benefit you might see. You should also ask how the drug will interact with anything else you're taking, including supplements.

Will this be a "lifer" drug? Lifer drugs are those that will be necessary for years, and usually for the rest of your life, such as blood pressure or cholesterol-lowering medications. It isn't wise to take any medication for the long term based wholly on the result of a single blood test or other one-time measure. For example, blood test results vary depending on the time of day the blood is drawn, if you ate beforehand, what you ate, and how much sleep you got. Blood pressure readings can vary similarly. Also, MRIs, ultrasounds,

CT scans, and other imaging tests can be interpreted differently depending on who is reading them. Ask for a repeat test and then make your decision.

If you'll be taking the drug long-term, can you wait before making a decision about it? You never know if a change in diet, lifestyle, or some other non-drug remedy might work instead. For most lifer medications, it usually isn't necessary to make an immediate decision. High cholesterol, moderately high blood pressure, and weakening bones, for example, are not health emergencies.

What are the results of long-term studies for this medication? That's particularly important for drugs that will be taken for many years and possibly for a lifetime.

Twenty-year studies are hard to come by but it never hurts to ask.

What would happen if you needed to go off the drug at some point in the future?

It's possible that after taking a drug for some time, intolerable side effects or reactions may develop that require you to stop taking it. You may be able to lower your dose or try a different medication, but it's wise to ask before you begin taking it.

Can you take an older version of a medication rather than the newest version?

Older drugs are often the better choice. They have been used in an immense population pool and daily life. New drugs, in contrast, have been tested on fewer people and the strict conditions in a study don't always reflect the varied lifestyles and predispositions of the population at large.



Follow These Steps to Fend off the Winter Blues

Frigid weather and short days can leave even the most cheerful of us feeling a little low. Every winter, seasonal affective disorder (SAD) affects more than 11 million Americans. Less sunlight can affect the circadian rhythm, the body's biological clock that governs certain brain wave activity and hormone production. Older people are even more susceptible to these effects. Although it may be tempting to hibernate for the season, there are plenty of ways to stave off the winter blues.



Boost your vitamin D. The body produces vitamin D when it's exposed to the sun. Because the days are shorter and the nights are longer, those levels drop during the colder and darker months. When you can't soak up the sun, taking vitamin D supplements can have a positive effect on mood.



Get some sun. The primary cause of winter depression is a lack of sunlight, and staying cooped up indoors worsens the effect. Even if it's cold, make sure to bundle up, get outside and soak up some natural light every day. With shorter days in the winter, consider taking a brisk morning walk or a stroll during your lunch break.



Mix and mingle. While it might be tempting to hibernate during winter, socializing with others is good for your mental health. Even when you don't feel in the mood to face the elements, forcing yourself to mingle can lift your mood. You may very well find that dinner with your friends is a lot more fun than you thought it would be.



Seek help if you need it. Therapy can be a helpful way to cope with the challenges of the winter doldrums. It's also a good idea to talk to your family doctor if you're experiencing feelings of sadness, depression, or other seasonal affective disorder symptoms.



Break a sweat. A good workout can be one of the best ways to combat the winter blues. While exercising, not only do you get a boost of endorphins, it also decreases the stress hormone cortisol. You don't have to perform extreme exercise to reap its depression-reducing benefits. A 2015 Harvard Medical School study found walking briskly for 30 minutes a day five times a week or

60 minutes a day three times a week had a significant influence on mild to moderate depression symptoms.

Combating the winter blues isn't as difficult as you might think. Incorporating a few simple activities into your weekly routine can help you feel motivated, energized, and possibly even enjoying the season.

Cold Weather Car Care Tips Every Driver Should Know

Harsh winter weather often wreaks havoc on automobiles. Salted streets, icy roads, freezing temperatures, and heavy snow present serious hazards. Winterizing your car is important for your safety and it can save you money on maintenance and repairs, too. Here are seven helpful winter car care tips to keep your vehicle looking and driving its best all season long.

- 1. Make sure your battery is in good shape.** Your vehicle's battery takes a hit when the mercury plummets. Get your battery professionally tested at a service station, auto parts store, or repair shop. A tired battery may just need to be charged. But if it's defective or more than five years old, replace it before it goes completely dead.
- 2. Check your lights.** Ensure that all of your vehicle's lights are working properly and that the lenses are clean so you'll have optimum visibility at night and motorists will be able to see you.
- 3. Monitor tire pressure regularly.** Driving on underinflated tires can cause them to wear down prematurely and lose traction on icy or slippery surfaces. Your tires lose a pound of pressure with every 10-degree drop in temperature, so check them at least once per week during the winter.
- 4. Keep your fuel tank at least half full.** It's wise to keep at least half a tank of fuel in your car at all times in case of an emergency or if you should get stuck in the snow and need to wait for rescue.
- 5. Check your coolant.** Antifreeze is tremendously important to your car, as it keeps the engine from freezing in cold temperatures. Make sure your car isn't low on coolant and that there aren't any leaks in your vehicle's engine that could cause it to drain. Many mechanics recommend a 50/50 mix of coolant and water, which usually results in a lower engine freezing point than antifreeze alone.
- 6. Protect your windshield wipers.** If you park outside, leave your wipers in the raised position to prevent them from freezing to the windshield. Do not use your wiper blades to remove frost, ice, or snow from the windshield; use an ice scraper instead.
- 7. Equip your vehicle with a survival kit.** If there's even a small possibility you'll end up on a rural road during the winter, a survival kit is a good idea. Select one that's stocked with a blanket, first-aid kit, knife, flashlight, jumper cables, and cellphone charger that works in your vehicle's cigarette lighter. In addition, keep a shovel in your trunk and some de-icer spray handy so you can access the engine or trunk in case they're frozen shut.



Community Focus

Helping Grieving Families Find 'A Healing Place'

Funeral providers are called upon to provide comfort for the grief-stricken, offering compassionate care, helpful resources, and access to qualified professionals amid times of great suffering.

To that end, Evan W. Smith Funeral Services is now offering grief counseling and other mental health services to the greater Dover and Wilmington communities in collaboration with Leslie Holley, a celebrated, nationally-certified Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor.

"A Healing Place" is a series of workshops offered on a quarterly basis during which Ms. Holley will facilitate sessions to help participants learn about the grief cycle and how to move through the grieving process in a healthy way.

Leslie Holley is a Nationally Certified Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC - MD, IL) (LPC - MO, DC, VA) (NCC) who earned her Masters in Community Counseling from DePaul University where she also taught masters level clinical counseling courses as an adjunct professor. Currently, she works with clients at her private practice, Healing-Circle, LLC in downtown Silver Spring, MD and provides mental health presentations throughout the D.C., Maryland, Virginia (DMV) area.

Leslie offers counseling for adults and couples suffering from trauma, anxiety, depression, post baby issues, co-dependency, life transitions, and addiction. She helps clients establish boundaries and practice

healthy communication strategies through their mental health journey. She specializes in Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), Internal Family Systems (IFS), and has been extensively trained in trauma and how it affects the brain.

Moreover, she completed her Masters thesis, with distinction, on the help seeking behaviors of African American men.

Leslie has presented on mental health topics for the American Counseling Association (ACA), the Illinois Counseling Association (ICA), Northwestern University, DePaul University and the Maryland Counseling Association Multicultural Division (MAMCD), to name a few.

Leslie has shared her mental health knowledge on Chicago WGN Radio and on the online radio show, Let's Stay Together, during their monthly mental health segment. She has been a contributing writer for about.com and UrbanBalance.com, covering her work with couples in counseling, anxiety coping tools, and understanding depression to name a few.

Some of the many topics she has presented on include therapy 101, anger management, trauma in children and adolescents, how to manage a crisis, conflict resolution, bullying in the workplace, assertive training, and thriving in a multigenerational workforce. She is the Past President of the Maryland Counseling Association Multicultural Division.



A Healing Place
With Leslie Holley, MA, LCPC, NCC
In collaboration with Evan W. Smith Funeral Services

- Grief Counseling & Mental Health Services
- Quarterly Workshops (in-person & virtual)
- Monthly Blog Articles
- Weekly Social Media Posts & Videos

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Featured Recipe: Simply Delicious Apple-Cinnamon Roll Crock Pot Casserole

Holiday breakfast or brunch is a breeze with this delectable slow-cooker recipe. Cinnamon rolls and chopped apples are coated in a sweet egg custard to create an irresistible combination.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (12 oz.) cans cinnamon rolls
- 2 cups peeled and chopped apples (about 2 large apples)
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 cup half and half
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

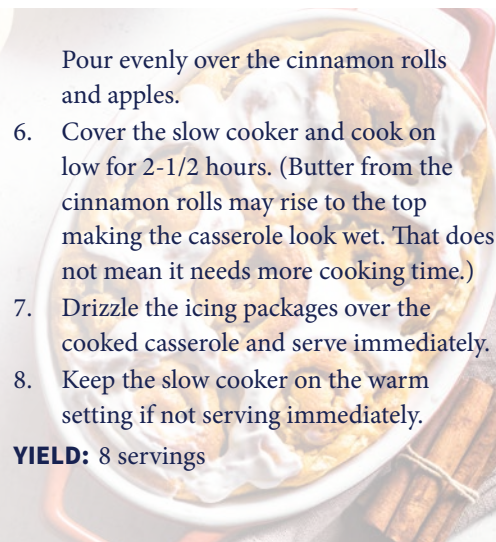
INSTRUCTIONS

1. Spray the bottom and sides of a large oval slow cooker with cooking spray.
2. Open the cans of cinnamon rolls and set aside the icing packages. Cut the cinnamon rolls into quarters.
3. Place the cinnamon rolls in an even layer in the crock pot.
4. Top with an even layer of apples.
5. In a large bowl, add the eggs, half and half, maple syrup, vanilla, and cinnamon. Whisk until well combined.

Pour evenly over the cinnamon rolls and apples.

6. Cover the slow cooker and cook on low for 2-1/2 hours. (Butter from the cinnamon rolls may rise to the top making the casserole look wet. That does not mean it needs more cooking time.)
7. Drizzle the icing packages over the cooked casserole and serve immediately.
8. Keep the slow cooker on the warm setting if not serving immediately.

YIELD: 8 servings



Two locations to serve our Delaware community:



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