

Primer For Holiday Survival

We all look forward to the holidays as a time of happiness, friendliness, fellowship, and harmony. Yet often our anticipation and excitement turns into feelings of depression and/or family disharmony.

Here are some ideas I gave 10 years ago for getting through the holiday season happily. In 2022, these ideas continue to be pertinent.

- ♦ Keep your expectations reasonable.
- ♦ Do not overbook yourself into a state of exhaustion.
- ♦ Remember, no matter what your plans, the holiday does not automatically take away feelings of aloneness, sadness, frustration, anger, and fear.
- ♦ Be careful about resentments related to holidays past. Declare an amnesty with whichever family member or friend you are feeling past resentments.
- ♦ Don't expect the holidays to be just as they were when you were a child. They NEVER are. YOU are not the same, and no one else in the family is either.
- ♦ Feeling like you are under-scheduled or under-planned for the holidays? Volunteer to serve Thanksgiving Dinner at a homeless shelter. Work with any number of groups that help children with special needs at the holidays.
- ♦ Plan unstructured, low-cost fun holiday activities: window -shop and look at the holiday decorations, look at people's lighting on their homes, take a trip to the countryside, etc.
- ♦ If you drink alcohol, do not let the holidays become a reason for over-indulging and hangovers. This will exacerbate your depression and anxiety.
- ♦ Give yourself a break; create time for yourself to do the things YOU love to do.

Holiday Table Prayer: *For days and times that bind us even closer together, for the bounty we now share, for teaching us that we can do no great things, but only small things with great love, we give you thanks, O Lord. ~ Amen.*

Holiday Blessings,

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