

Peace, Hope, and Joy

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The holiday season is here as we celebrate Christmas, New Years, Hanukkah, or other traditions. It is a time of gathering with family and friends, expressing love and gratitude by acts of service, devotion, and gift exchanges. We sing songs of Peace on Earth, Joy to the World, and Jingle Bells, reminding us all of the feelings we long to be wrapped up in.

For some the holidays can stir less than desirable feelings. There can be high expectations from ourselves or others in preparing for a magical season; finding the right gift, traditional meals, decorating, and participating in holiday activities. We run ourselves ragged trying to create the “perfect” moment, spending time, money, or energy we do not have. Some struggle with self-love, others struggle to forgive, or may be missing a loved one. Be sure to get help from a professional if you are experiencing any disturbing or harmful feelings.

I once heard anxiety can stem from fear of the future and depression, a mourning of the past. This resonates for me. With gratitude and knowledge gained from the past, trust and hope in a bright future, we begin to live in the present and see what is before us. Feelings of anxiety or depression, if not worked through, can create chemical imbalances. These feelings can also come from not maintaining appropriate personal, emotional, or physical boundaries; giving or taking more than we have of time, money, love etc. How can we arrange our lives so we have greater balance and stay present? This question requires self-reflection, but Dr. Christopher gave some very good advice in his School of Natural Healing book. He says, “Some people follow a very clean diet, take herbs, and are still uncomfortable or even sick. Why? Because they toxify themselves with unhappy, negative thoughts or behaviors. You possess a degree of health right now. Thank God for that, then go forward to build even better health. Train yourself to live with an “attitude of gratitude,” live positively and generously, and be sure to nurture your spirituality, including prayer and meditation. We consider this to be so important that it is equal to your dietary and herbal programs.”¹

Here is a list of simple healthy habits to help balance your body, mind and spirit.

1. **Sufficient sleep** About 10-12 hours for children and 7-9 hours for adults.
2. **Plenty of water** At least 8-10 full glasses a day. Water keeps our excretory organs running smoothly, healthier pH, and blood pressure.
3. **Reduce/Eliminate** sugar, processed foods, and animal products (to be consumed sparingly, a couple times a week at most). Set aside a day or meal that you can enjoy some holiday treats, but not to overindulge.
4. **Exercise** A walk outside, chair yoga, regular yoga, running, core training, deep breathing, weights, swimming, or whatever you enjoy, moving at least 3-5 days a week.
5. **Herbs recommended for Anxiety and Depression** Black Cohosh, Chamomile, Skullcap, Valerian, St. John’s Wort, Blue Vervain, Peppermint, Passion flower, Wood Betony, Dr. Christopher’s Relaxease, Dr. Christopher’s MindTrac. (For best results, take herbs to support bowels and liver and help break down hormones and move out toxins).
6. **Honor boundaries and limits** Simplify expectations and enjoy relationships more. Take a quiet moment each day to meditate, remind yourself of your worth. Each one of us, no matter what we have or have not done in this life, is worthy of love and care. You are a miracle, just being alive. Each day is a new day to make better choices. Let go of the past. Live in the present and look forward with faith and hope in a secure future.

The true meaning behind our holidays may be the very message we need, and a gentle reminder to take better care of each other, our body, mind, and spirit. May your holidays be filled with greater health, peace, hope, and joy!

Kelly Pomeroy is a Master Herbalist and Adviser for The School of Natural Healing. She is also a certified Foot Zoner and Foot Zone Instructor. Her passion is learning, helping, and teaching others how to be healthier and happier. She lives in Utah with her four wonderful children.

References

1 Christopher, J. (2014). *School of Natural Healing*. Springville, Utah: Christopher Publications.