

Christmas Nurturing

Not everyone has a picture postcard Christmas, lined with family. For some of my clients, this time of year can bring up some pretty difficult emotions and for other clients they can feel glad yet another year is almost done.

So, here are some tips of how to nurture yourself during all the festive madness, whether through distraction from painful feelings, or allowing the space for the feelings to flow, whichever way you feel is best for you...

For many, Christmas is about hope, joy, sharing, giving, and family. Some will see it as the lovely picture postcard images of family reconnecting, and yet for others it can be lonely and alone, whether by circumstance or choice. Some will be missing passed over loved ones, others can have had difficult family upbringings, and yet others can feel they don't have "a belonging" to return to and have to find their own place and peace within themselves.

So what can you do for you?

Don't wait until the last minute

Make a list ahead of time of the specific things you can do if you find yourself in a bad place, rather than waiting until you are sitting there and going "what now?" This list gives you a starting point for you to then customise your own list.

Relax

Check you have your bubble bath, fuzzy slippers and a face mask at the ready. There are face masks for men too you know. Have a soak in the bath, with your favourite bath salts, get out your favourite candles, incense, crystals and Stephen King novel perhaps.

Volunteering

It can be enriching to give back to the community. There are places you can assist with Christmas lunches and charity foundations to help provide a nourishing, lovely lunch or dinner for those less fortunate.

Secret Charity, Santa

There are various locations you can give a gift for children whose parents cannot afford to buy presents for them, often these are bought and handed in unwrapped to the charity to place under the tree and to be given to the children for Christmas. Contact your local charity for details, before Christmas.

Naffy craft projects

Probably not the day to take up elaborate macramé as that could get frustrating, but you could get a colouring book and some pencils, or use your power tools and some wood. Plan ahead as many shops are closed on Christmas day. Glitter is always fun, you can never have too much glitter, well I think so anyhow. Go to your local craft supplier and see what is there, they have some pretty crazy stuff to play with these days, and much of it is for adults with scrapbooks and things. Your craft shop can be a most interesting place.

Check into a nice resort

If it won't break your bank and you have been working way too hard, have a look at last minute deals to anywhere in a 50 - 100 mile radius and use your navigator to get you there!

No resorts? Feel like camping? Now there is an adventure. Take bug repellent...

Read a book

Visit the library or book shop ahead of time and promise not to read it til Christmas day, it's a present to yourself. You could even go to a second hand shop and make the ultimate score of a lifetime if you know what you are looking for and have a bit of luck on your side. Now, in the slowness of Christmas day, you get to slow down long enough after an action packed year to actually read something! Who needs plane tickets to Barbados, you can go through a cupboard and into another world, or headbutt a brick wall at a train station and end up on a platform you never knew was there going to some school on a train with weird dragons at the other end. That's just some of the places books can transport you to... What's not to love?

Movies

So there is this new Star Wars movie that is possibly playing at the moment I hear... And there is possibly even more than one movie playing... But there is also Netflix, and so many other ways to watch movies. Make sure you have popcorn ahead of the day.

Making jam

Preserves last a long time and you can give them as gifts to people at any point in the year, or you can just keep it in the cupboard for a very, very long time and have lovely jam. You could even practice making sorbet, or other recipes you never thought of trying. Note, if you are going to make a complex dish, also ensure you make another, simple dish. Then if one fails the other is still there and you are still feeling good...

Spring/Winter/ Summer cleaning

How much "stuff" do you have in your place you just haven't had the time until now to clear out and declutter from? Hey presto. Now, there is an opportunity! Decluttering is a grounding thing to do, so bonus points to you! Get some boxes for the stuff you want to donate to your local charity. Two birds, one stone... Can't be bothered cleaning anything? Then don't, back to Netflix for you! You could also listen to podcasts of [Soul Star Radio](#), haha, free plug !

Give everyone extra space in traffic,

It's a full moon after all, leave earlier, drive more calmly and plan ahead.

Practice patience

Complaining won't make the checkout line move any quicker, but more people will be frustrated. If someone else seems to be losing their patience, try to relax and either disengage or send a thought of healing and light to them to help them calm. If someone is abusing the checkout staff, you could speak up and give that staff member some relief.

If you are missing someone

If you have lost a loved one, remember there is no stop watch on grief here. You have to allow for it, if you find thoughts go back to them, reflect on special and positive moments and know that they DO hear you, and they are a breathe away, mostly hugging you from spirit. Give thanks about the good

things you shared, and if not all was pleasant memories, put your mind towards what you are doing for yourself now, and be gentle on yourself. Will you be better helped by distraction using other thoughts or activities, or do you want to allow for that space to simply feel? Honour your needs.

Helping out someone less fortunate

Sometimes people can feel disenchanting by the materialism in our society and may find it's the gift that you give that gives you the feeling of being more fully present and whole. Is there someone else who could do with a cheer up, a visit, a feed and some company? Sometimes seeing the look of joy or relief on someone else's face can light up your own heart and put you back on track. This is why I usually tell people who want to be rich to donate some of what they earn and to give to their community. You are richest when your heart shares.

Don't commit to things that make you unhappy

If you feel really uncomfortable about going to an event, and under pressure, and that this will cause you undue distress and that you may accidentally lose your cool and say something that sets off some kind of nuclear toxic cloud of not happiness, then please, just don't go. You can always make a polite apology and send a card. And then tell them what you think on another date. Be kind to you not just everyone else.

Bring a mate

Sometimes friends are more like family, can you plan ahead to drop around to a friend and hang out for a while in between their family time? Do you have a friend who could do with enjoying a seat at your family's table?

Social inclusion

Carry thought for our extended family, which is all of our brothers and sisters of this earth, from different cultures and our brothers and sisters from the indigenous peoples who often carry the wisdom but also need our assistance in feeling accepted in the wider community as part of our global family.

Christmas at a nice restaurant

Some restaurants, aware of the different cultures and different family situations actually open up at Christmas for a Festive lunch. You will most likely have a Christmas hat and at the very least staff will help pull on the other end of the bon bon and you can laugh at the silly toy inside. You may also meet some interesting other people you might not ordinarily.

Fish and chips at the beach

Something we do more here in Australia. It can be quite relaxing to sit on the jetty on a summer's day and just enjoy the ocean breeze.

If you are in the northern hemisphere, the cold would make that beach idea pretty impractical especially if you are in New York or Dublin right now.

Let's change that out to having a hot chocolate while wearing a snuggly or wrapped up in a kotatsu and watching the snow or rain fall.

And remember, the perfect thing about imperfection is that we just accept things as they are, and find ways of finding good in that.

Lots of love

Jacqueline Close Moore