

## **More Thoughts on the Holiday's**

Many Holiday traditions have been established and rooted in family life over the course of several generations and we look forward to sharing them and passing these on to our younger family members. Along with the joy and festive focus of "The Season", the holidays can also be source of great stress for many people. Indeed the joy and celebration is often tempered by stress, sadness, nostalgia, and melancholy.

Upon reflection it seems that many folks pass from our earth right around a significant holiday. It has been said that loved ones choose to "transition to spirit form" near the holidays so they are always remembered. Holidays can be difficult for folks who have experienced the recent loss of a loved one or through the conjuring up of memories from days gone by with those that have left us. In a single season the entire dynamic of family gatherings can be tossed into uncertainty by the departure of a loved one.

Celebrating the lives of those who have passed or cannot be with us can be a great way to remember and include them in our gatherings by acknowledging their contributions to our lives. Some families elect to tell stories about deceased or absent family members, while others look at pictures together and yet others will create new traditions to pass on. One family made a quilt and pillow cases from some personal clothing of a family member while another decided to put together a Holiday tribute collage. Others record video messages to send to loved ones or communicate via social media internet sites.

As each individual is a unique entity, so too are our family units, in modern times quite different from years past. Families may be comprised of single parent homes or split entities in cases of divorce, with family members feeling torn or guilty by choosing to celebrate one of the holidays at one home and not another. With so many variables today, what are intended to be joyous occasions at times can have the opposite effect and may be happening to a greater extent in recent years. Others have opted for a "family of choice" that includes non-biological members in their own, close, circle of loved ones.

Spending time with other important people in our lives including friends, co-workers, those from social clubs, organizations and neighborhood groups, can provide an additional source of comfort. Surround yourself with people that appreciate you!

Doing nurturing things for our spirits and bodies can be particularly helpful. A massage, a bath, a brisk walk, meditation, a Reiki session, yoga or a chiropractic visit can help us refocus and become grounded in the here and now; with a deeper appreciation for those that are with us in the present and others from the past that have left their own, special, indelible marks on the way we live our lives all year round.

Once again remember that more than half of all the alcohol consumed in the United States during the year occurs during 5-6 weeks, from Thanksgiving to New Year's. If you plan to drink be sure you do not drive; make transportation arrangements in advance.