

The Holiday Season 2017

This holiday season as we continue existing traditions that are long established and rooted in families over several generations, we will once again look forward to sharing these annual rituals and passing them on to younger family members. Let us also welcome and embrace an expanded and even more benevolent approach during this season of giving and look outward towards those with greater needs.

More and more of our friends and neighbors are supporting their local area and neighborhoods with practical gifts to be redeemed locally and geared towards boosting communities. Having dinner in your neighborhood or providing friends and loved ones with a local merchant gift certificate is one way to have an impact close to home. Some gift ideas include purchasing gift cards for nail salons, car washes, oil changes, beauty parlors, super markets, gas stations, coffee shops and hardware stores among others.

Some local folks make an effort to give warm clothing items or bring hot meals to locals in need while others will elect to volunteer at a local shelter, soup kitchen or food bank. Many local communities focus on providing traditional Thanksgiving meals of turkey and the trimmings for those in need. It would be a nice practice to see these efforts continue not only during the holidays but all year round as well.

The ritual that is holiday gift giving, often results in excessive, un-needed, giving when just a small shift in intentions would provide others, with real time needs, some basic life essentials. Some families have chosen to suspend traditional gift giving to each other and instead provide gifts or other needed items for individuals and families in need.

The holidays can also serve as reminder to welcome in and check on family members, friends and neighbors who may live alone or have limitations on their communications or mobility. Bringing a hot meal to someone or providing another needed service are thoughtful acts that will likely make a difference. To go one step further perhaps consider giving a gift anonymously to truly capture the essence of unconditional caring.

While the festive focus of the “Holiday Season” typically sets the tone let us be mindful that the holidays can also increase stress for many people. Some folks will have greater difficulty during these times, others will be impacted specifically by the absence of a loved one when memories return from joyful or even painful times in the past.

Self-care is important so be sure to spend time with loving, supportive family members and friends and do some nurturing things for your own individual body, mind and spirit.

Finally remember that more than half of all the alcohol consumed in the United States during the entire year happens between Thanksgiving and New Years. So please remain alert and aware of others. Be sure that if you plan to drink, you absolutely do not drive!

Have a safe and Happy Holiday season!

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