

*Holiday Health Tips
for a Stress Free
December to Remember!*



Introduction

December is a busy month, but don't let that rob you of enjoying your family, your work, the reason for the season, and life's little pleasures! Christmas Day doesn't have to be perfect to be incredible! You don't need to stress yourself out trying to make it so. Take time to reflect, appreciate, and enjoy the here and now. Why? Because stress is something that contributes to destroying your health. It slowly eats away at your joy (which God gives us to sustain us) until your outlook and even your body is compromised. Stress is a huge deal. Don't ignore it. It even influences your weight which (of course) has a huge impact on your overall health!

Here's the thing. I'd be willing to bet you can't remember the Christmas gift you received from your aunt or brother or daughter last year! We, as a society, spend an inordinate amount of time running around spending money we don't really have to buy the perfect gifts. We brave the crowds at the malls buying items we're not even sure will be a big hit trying to make an impression and send a message that we care. What if I told you that there's a better, more festive and less anxiety-filled way?

It isn't the gifts they'll remember. It's the memories you make with them! It's been said that it's the way you make them feel that your friends and family will remember. However, that time spent making memories does have a cost. Your health!

I know from personal experience how limited your energy and abilities can be when you're not feeling your best due to being unhealthy. And the longer you're unhealthy (the older you get) the more that affects and limits your ability to have enough energy to run around with your family or get on the floor with your grandkids. Sometimes life can catch you by surprise by bringing your unhealthy life to an early end due to a heart attack or something else as deadly.

You can't make memories if you're not there! We start off life thinking nothing can hurt us. We think our young bodies are invincible. For some, that mindset is challenged early and for others it's learned in midlife. Wherever you are in life, your health is of vital importance.

One way to increase your health is to take better care of your body. For some that means losing weight. For others it means reducing stress or getting better sleep. For yet others it means just getting better nutrition. I can help you with those things and make it easier for you to reach your health goals.

Another way to increase your health is to slow down and enjoy the holiday in front of you so, right now, I'd like to share some ways we can slow down this Christmas, reduce anxiety, and create memories with our loved ones.

May the Lord guide you to and keep you this holiday season and bring you the opportunities to connect with the people who matter most to you!

The following are a list of six things you can do that will create joyful memories that will make a powerful difference in your life and in the lives of your loved ones:

1. Activities

Instead of spending so much time and money on the perfect gift, think about the perfect day. What could you do with your friends and family that would be memorable? What traditions could you start? What things you do and your family enjoy? What might bring you more enjoyment?

Take some time to reflect on the things you used to do as a kid. What do you remember fondly? Start to think more about the activities and memories you could make than the gifts and food.

How about a walk around the block with your kids as you look at all the pretty Christmas lights on the houses? If it's too cold out, why not bundle them all up and go for a drive around the neighborhood? The walk would be good healthy exercise, but a stress free drive around the neighborhood where you could discover the beauty of the season would be a healthy alternative to the hustle and bustle of the crowds at the mall.

What if you planned a slumber party by the fire with the kids or grandkids? Is there a fun reel on Facebook or Instagram you'd like to recreate? How's about getting out your old photo album or displaying your old family pictures on the tv?

You could plan one peaceful family time each week or each weekend. You could do something simple and fun each day if you like. It doesn't need to be anything big. It doesn't even have to require careful planning. It could be as simple and fun as recreating an old family photo you've treasured. It's a lot of fun to pick a childhood picture from decades ago and recreate them as adults.

Make snow angels. Have a Christmas movie night. Bring out the old favorites. Rerun all the old family movie films. Have a family old movie night. What's something you've always wanted to do? Or redo? Reinvent your December to meet your current family needs or goals.

Pray together. What are you thankful for this year? Reflect on your wins, goals, and blessings. Pray for your friends and family.

2. Gifts that Inspire or Encourage

Why not be a beacon of hope and encouragement to your friends and family? What would encourage or inspire the people on your gift list this Christmas? Sometimes the best gift is time spent. Time spent with dear ones will help you destress during the difficult holiday season and it will encourage and inspire those you spend time with.

Instead of an expensive gift you're not even sure they'll like, why not give them the gift of time with you? If they live close by, you can give them a special card or box and inside share that you'll be taking them to a movie, event, or concert. Maybe schedule time to do something more active in the summer. Gifts of our time are a real blessing. Here are some ideas:

- Offer to run an errand for them
- Cook them dinner
- Have them over for dinner
- Help her with her laundry
- Help clean his house
- Offer to go shopping for her
- Pick them some flowers
- Offer to take their kids while they go Christmas shopping
- Offer to use your expertise to help someone: Hook up DVD player, put up Christmas lights...
- Write a letter telling them what they mean to you – a keepsake gift they can read over and over again.
- Write out a Gift Certificate for services to be rendered later

Crafty Gifts: Are you crafty? Do you have a talent you could share? Here are some ways you can use the talents and resources God gave you to bless others at CHRISTmas with very little out of pocket if any at all!

- Applique/puff paint/embroidery CHRISTmas Sweatshirt Knit scarf, gloves, hat, sweater
- Sewing project: skirt, shirt, dress Jewelry
- CHRISTmas Audio/Video: Record your own piano/guitar music
- Make preserves or apple butter
- Tie dye a shirt or blanket
- Write a poem/story/song especially for them
- Photography project

Gifts don't have to come from a store. They can be quite special because they come from your heart, your expertise, and/or your time. Choose gifts of time you can do with your kids or grandkids. Choose events you can spend time enjoying each other's company. Choose gifts that encourage, inspire, and give them memories that will last a lifetime.

3. Sharing Your Expertise

Do you have talents you could share? Offer to teach someone. Doing an activity with your kids or grandkids, friends or relatives is an incredible gift to give others and a time of peace and joy for you. Even if you normally make your living charging for your craft, offer to teach a special someone for free. What a great way to spend time making memories and leaving a legacy with others. God gave us talents and sometimes we charge for those, but other times we can give them away as a precious gift.

Have you a degree in something another might benefit from? Do you have time to mentor someone who needs your experience or training? What a way to bless others and spend time together!

Is there something you know how to do the old-fashioned way? Are you of a certain age? Would your experience or understanding of something long gone benefit another on your gift list? Why not write to them, spend time to show them, or otherwise impart your specialized knowledge to someone else? Another great way to make memories and give your gift of time.

Some ideas for you:

- Talents like sewing, crocheting, art, photography, crafts, piano, guitar, etc.
- Personal knowledge of history, politics, nutrition, family history, investing
- Historic understanding/perspective like living through a war, living in a different country, etc
- Explaining what life was like before cell phones, computers, internet, etc
- Sharing a life lesson you learned
- Start a book club, Bible study, or weekly coffee date with friends/family
- Host a Zoom call for friends or family who live far and watch a movie together

4. Bringing Value

What are some ways you could bring value to those you love in the coming month or year? Think about the things you know to be true that you could share. Bringing value to others also brings peace and fulfillment to you. How could you encourage or inspire people?

You might have a talent for writing funny sayings, creating inspiring visual representations from scriptures or quotes, or reaching out to help others who are going through a trial. Why not write or create something you could share with others? So many are struggling especially during the holidays. Now is a great time to bring value to others. And after you do, you could spend some time discussing it and making memories as you do.

So many people need inspiration, hope, and encouragement during the holidays. Why not arrange a post on Facebook for you to share? You could then share it to messenger to make a special message for those on your heart.

Canva is an app that you can use to help you create posts you can share on social media and with friends and family over text. It's a fairly simple way to create fun and amazing looking little graphics or pictures that will help inspire the people in your life. It's amazing how quickly you can create something special and unique for someone. People love to feel special, and this is one way to create something you can share with people and include a short text message along with it that speaks to them individually. What a great way to tell someone you're thinking about them.

5. Sharing Laughter

Laughter is a great way to spend time with others bringing joy. Joy is something, as I said before, that God gives us to combat stress and bring us peace. Why not invite a friend over to watch a funny movie? Or Zoom with a family member far away while reminiscing about funny things you did as kids?

You can use Canva to create some memes from some funny pictures you have on your phone. Send them to family and friends to bring joy during this time of year or any other!

Know someone who is going through a tough time? Why not share a funny video you know they'd like and spend a bit of time chatting over the phone or over Facebook messenger?

Share the laughter and joy with those on your heart and in your life by being intentional about taking a moment to think about what that person would appreciate and taking a few minutes to send a text message, audio message, or even a short video.

6. Planning for Next Year

Don't forget to spend some time before the new year to plan for your year ahead. Be intentional. Take some time to determine what you want your new year to look like. How could you accomplish this? What goals will you set for yourself and your family?

If you aren't setting goals and working to achieve those goals, you aren't really able to feel the joy God has for you. The Lord gives us each different talents and dreams, but He leaves it up to us to pursue them. We are stressed and unhappy if we aren't do so.

So, what do you want your next year to look like in the following areas of your life?

- Health: weight loss? Optimization?
- Job/Career: Are you inspired by what you do now? What would be more rewarding?
- Family: Planning a family? Expanding your family? What do you want to do for them this year?
- Spiritual Life: Are you growing? Does God want you do embark on a new ministry?
- Financial: Does your job/career meet your needs? Do you want a new career? Business? Do you need supplemental income?
- Hobbies: Do you want to learn to play piano? Travel?
- Legacy: What do you want to leave your kids and grandkids? What do you want to be remembered for?
- Charity: What charity is on your heart? How would you like to move that forward?

My Hope and Prayer for You

Stress plays a big role in destroying health and joy goes a long way to increasing it. Find ways to lower your stress and increase your joy this season. Christmas is the perfect time to make memories and making memories is a perfect way to lower stress and increase your joy.

I hope this little book has inspired you to make the time you spend with your family and friends of greater importance than the gifts you buy, the food you eat, or the craziness the holidays often bring.

Your family and friends may never remember what gift you bought them, but they will always remember how you made them feel as you spent time making memories together. You will not remember the gifts you gave or the food you ate, but you'll always remember fondly the time you spent making memories. So, make sure you have the health and energy you need to enjoy the holidays and your new year to the fullest.

If you'd like to explore getting healthy (whether that's healthy body, healthy mind, or healthy finances), I'd love to share my recommendations for you. Let's chat! Until then...

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



If you're frustrated trying to lose weight and get healthy on your own and you'd like to see how I can help guide you, here's a simple way form to fill out that will help me determine the program that's right for you: <https://form.jotform.com/jojo766/health-assessment>