

The Thinking Room

Life Coaching

Get into the habit of happiness!

“You yourself, as much as anyone in the entire universe, deserves your love and affection.” Buddha

Don't let Christmas get you down. Too many people tie themselves up in knots of anguish as early as September and October over the thought of Christmas. Most of those are single people. It seems like a wave of panic envelops their life at the dread of having to spend Christmas alone when everyone else is having a 'great time.'

Really, it's all a matter of perception; how do you know that everyone else, except you, is having a fabulous time? There are numerous articles and books about reducing stress at Christmas. Lots of people feel the pressure of having to entertain family and friends they couldn't care less for! So not everyone who is with someone is having this expected good time. In other words, whether you are single or in a relationship is *not* the determining factor in enjoyment at this time of year, or any time!

Maybe it's time to change your way of seeing and experiencing Christmas and the rest of the year too. If you decide that you will buy into the media-driven idea of what Christmas means, the chances are that you will feel miserable. After all, many television adverts and magazine articles are focused around family, children, being with a partner and materialism.

This is not the only way to live and be happy. You have choices. You may decide that you do not wish to celebrate Christmas at all. If you do, make things special for yourself. Remember though, that it is not events that make us happy; having a constant happy state of mind is the key.

If you rely on occasions or things to make you happy, you are living on the whim of things external to yourself. These things, if they do not match up to your expectations, will cause you disappointment. Work on enjoying every little thing, every moment in your life and every person...this will require a determination and a slowing down to witness precious times and moments. This will lead to a change in attitude that understands that happiness is within us. Noticing the beauty in the things we normally take for granted is important and fulfilling.

The message of this article extends far beyond Christmas or any public holiday; it is about getting into the habit of making *yourself* feel secure, happy, loved and special. If you are not able to love yourself, you will not be able to offer love sufficiently to your relationships.

This is not to say that you hide yourself away in your own world to do this because it is important for our survival needs to be around other people as well; but these 'other people' do not have to be just a partner. So, over this Christmas period, make a commitment to yourself to begin looking at things differently and start looking after yourself in a more nurturing and nourishing way.

Start to enjoy yourself. Start making yourself feel happy. Follow the tips on the next page to start off this process and have some fun with it and yourself!

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Try the following tips to start making yourself feel happy at Christmas and always...

1. Make a commitment today to develop a happy state of mind
2. Slow down and take time to appreciate the little things around you – when was the last time you looked up at the sky to see the moon and stars?
3. Start using a filter – be selective in the TV you watch, the radio you listen to and what you read—if the messages in them do not support the way that you want to live, eliminate them!
4. Don't panic if you are on your own on Saturday night - make a date with a friend/family or design a special night in for yourself doing things that you enjoy
5. Make a list of all of the things that make you a special person
6. Make a list of all the things that that you are grateful for—read it every day
7. Make a list of all the things you enjoy –choose 2 or 3 things from that list to do with yourself or a friend/family each week
8. Compliment yourself at least 3 times a day!
9. Revel in the freedom at Christmas time to do all the things that you love doing; make a commitment to enjoying them in your own company
10. Do all of the above repeatedly, even if it is uncomfortable at first, then you will see the rewards of making yourself feel happy