

The Family Friend



A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

Volume 19, Number 11

November, 2017

Holiday Expectations

Every year, the holidays (Thanksgiving and Christmas) come upon us—along with the traditional music, parties and gifts. The message usually sent is (as the song says): “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!” However, for many, if not for most, that is not altogether (or even a little) true. For various reasons, a season which boasts of joy, brings heart-ache.

One thing to keep in mind is that no person can be happy all the time, even for a season that lasts about a month or so. Life is filled with ups and downs, and even a season of joyous activity will include some things that aren’t so joyous.

Another thing is that the season revolves around family time together, and when something disrupts that (death, divorce, separation because of deployment, etc.), the seasonal feelings of joy may be difficult or seemingly impossible.

So, the best approach to the holidays is a measured one—taking into account reality of feelings and the ongoing

journey of grief in many families. We can go a long way in dealing with disappointment if we mitigate it by realistic expectations and proactive living.

In an effort to help us all in dealing with the holidays, I am including some tips found in a little publication entitled “**Coping With the Holidays**” and was published by mental health boards in Ohio. Similar lists have appeared in *The Family Friend* before, but these are still valid and still helpful. To all of these excellent ideas, I would add: Pray to the Lord for strength during this time (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and trust him to take care of you through it all (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

My wish for you is that you have a safe and joyous (joy mingled with patience and understanding) holiday season with your family and friends.

—Lance Cordle



Ten Ways to “Take Charge” During the Holidays

1. Know your needs and ask people to help you meet them.
2. Don’t expect more from others than you are willing to give yourself.
3. Have a plan of action to help you enjoy the holidays. (Who, What, When, Where)
4. Think positively about yourself, your family, your friends, and your situation.
5. Take advantage of things available that do not cost money.
6. Don’t compare yourself to others.
7. Plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time to coordinate activities.
8. Count your blessings—see the cup as half-full, rather than half-empty.
9. Learn to live more with less.
10. Pat yourself on the back for getting through another holiday.

How to Help Someone Deal With Grief

1. Allow them to talk about their feelings and memories, and try to get them involved in new activities.
2. Change your traditional pattern in some way—have the family dinner at a different place, or open the gifts at a different time. Create new rituals and family traditions.
3. Don't let a person spend too much time alone. If a person becomes depressed, help is available 24 hours a day, by calling your local crisis hotline.
4. Remember, many people think of their pets as part of the family, and their loss can be just as painful.

Surviving Divorce

1. After divorce, be sure to let the children know that the holidays will continue, but in a different way. When making plans, be sure to decide ahead of time how the holidays will be divided and remember to include the children in this planning.
2. Make sure you and your children have realistic expectations.
3. Try to get plenty of rest, exercise and eat healthy so that you will be better able to cope. Remember, tired children are more easily stressed and likely to be moody.
4. Plan fun activities. If memories are too painful, consider a vacation or a visit to out-of-state relatives.

5. Take one day at a time. Rely on support from friends and family and realize that it will get easier with time.

Money Saving Tips

1. Stop or limit your use of credit cards. It's hard to determine how much you have spent until the credit card bills arrive.
2. Take advantage of sales and comparison shopping. You could easily save more than 50% on some purchases. If the item you want isn't on sale, ask if it will be going on sale in the near future.
3. Consider a part-time job, especially at stores that offer employee discounts.
4. Gift-wrapping can be expensive. Plan ahead and buy next year's paper after the holidays this year for substantial savings.
5. Start in January to save all your change at the end of the day in a jar. Don't use any of it until the holidays.
6. Shop at factory outlet stores or buying clubs that often offer lower prices.
7. Make sure you record all checks, so that none of them are returned because of insufficient funds.
8. Save on postage by sending cards to those you won't see during the holidays.
9. Watch for special sales later in the season. When holiday spending is sluggish, stores often discount merchandise.

Published Monthly by
Calvert City church of Christ

A Low-Fat Holiday

Helpful Hints:

1. Don't skip meals to save on calories. You'll be so hungry that you'll overeat.
2. Snack on low-fat food (fruit and vegetables) before attending parties, to avoid overeating rich, fattening foods.
3. Don't keep leftovers around. Send them home in holiday containers with guests.
4. Don't deny yourself all desserts and fun foods. Allow yourself a small sampling of a few special treats, or you'll feel deprived and end up overeating.
5. When eating out, do what you can to cut fat. Avoid sauces, gravies, cheese, mayonnaise, butter and margarine, or ask for them on the side. Choose baked, grilled, roasted, steamed, broiled or poached foods instead of fried.
6. Try to eat fruit and vegetables as much as possible (at least one each meal) to offset desserts and meat/cheese finger-foods.
7. Eat slowly whenever you can so you'll eat less. Spend your time talking with family and friends instead of eating.
8. Don't start a diet around the holidays. You'll feel guilty when you don't stick with it and end up eating more.