

# LightBalance Insight

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## The Holidays - Good Times or Bad?

The holidays can bring up strong emotion for people. Lots of families are not a Hallmark card of joy and love. This is the time of year when the family is highlighted. If your family is in crisis, you do not have a family, or you have been deeply (or even casually) disappointed with your family then all those feelings can get highlighted also. Don't despair, this is normal. Over the years many have told me that they feel like they will never get over the disappointments of their families, especially their family of origin. The good news is that you are right you will never get over it; you may be disappointed for life!

Acceptance is a huge part of healing but it does not occur until you have grieved sufficiently. Part of grieving and accepting may mean that you do not "go home" for the holidays, because that "home" does not exist. Everyone has heard the definition of "crazy" which says *doing the same things, but expecting different results IS crazy*. But how many of us do this every holiday? I know I certainly did for years. Then I would feel like someone punched me in the stomach for weeks after...does anyone know what I'm talking about?

So if your dream home does not exist, what can you do? You can look around and create a life filled with people you want to spend the holidays with. You can do whatever it takes to heal your life in a way that allows you to be authentic. For some this may mean not going anywhere near the family of origin. For others this may mean only going for dinner and then retreating to a hotel room to regroup (trust me you can spend the money on the hotel or on the recovery therapy afterwards, you choose).

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# Guiding you towards a life of greater peace

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## The Holidays - Good Times or Bad?

We know we are healed when we can catch ourselves falling into the old emotional traps and take a moment to notice how we are setting ourselves up and then doing something to take care of ourselves that is NOT self destructive (such as getting drunk, high, binging on some "comfort" food or creating some drama within our current relationship). Please note, if you are early in your recovery or exploration of family wounds, your hope this year may be simply to survive. Healing holiday wounds and failed expectations can take much work, so do not abuse yourself by expecting to be healed before you are.

*Tina*

## Holiday Survival Strategies



Here are some strategies for getting through the holidays without too much time spent returning to your childhood feelings:

- 1) Book a vacation with your best friend and eat turkey in a totally different place.
- 2) If you do not have a best friend, book a vacation with a singles group and make new friends or enjoy the solitude.
- 3) Only go for dinner, unless dinner is the time when things get really crazy...then only go for presents and dessert.
- 4) If you must go out of town book a hotel (bring your own pillow so that you get a really good night's sleep). Relatives love to be offended at the idea of you booking a hotel. Tell them you sleepwalk or snore or can't fall asleep unless the temperature is 62 degrees or you could simply say, "It is not my intention to offend you, I just need to have some down time." Under no circumstances are you to compromise on this if you feel strongly. Your loved ones can handle their own emotions (this may be a tightly kept secret that they work hard on you not knowing).
- 5) Book a massage, acupuncture or chiropractic adjustment before and after the holiday.
- 6) Also, keep your therapy appointment before and after the holidays.
- 7) Start a new tradition and invite your family of origin to participate. Nothing is better to breaking old patterns than to do something different. Note: If you do not want your family of origin there, do NOT invite them; just start your own new tradition.
- 8) Remember you cannot change your relatives. You can only change yourself, and that is only on a very good day!
- 9) Take some time to do the things that really bring you joy and eliminate the tasks that you only do because you feel like you "have" to. Be radical. Don't send cards or put up a tree or bake or whatever else you do not want to do.
- 10) Ask to be given strength and expect that the God who loves you more than you can possibly imagine, will.



### Tidbits

*This is the season in the darkest time of year when the light will soon start to return. It happens every year without us doing a thing. Marvel at the miracle. Please enjoy a Peace filled holiday in whatever way you celebrate the Light.*



*Peace be with you!!*