

The Ins and Outs of Christmas

By Gita Saraydarian

If you have been wondering how to find deeper meaning in Christmas, here are some ideas to ponder on.

There is an inner and outer side to Christmas. In order to find deep meaning in our Holiday activities, we need to consider our outer and inner needs. When we find the way to balance these two aspects, we find that life is enjoyable and the Holidays are a wonderful time to build lasting memories of love and joy.

The outer preparations are necessary to build lines of loving communication with our family and friends. For example, we clean and decorate our homes. We purchase new clothes. We decorate a tree symbolizing everlasting life. We put lights and beautiful objects on our trees. The decorations we use are like jewels of memories from times past and times still to be had. How often do you open the Christmas tree box and remember the past holidays with each tree ornament? One little ornament brings a rush of memories of Mom and Dad, the baby's first Christmas, the special memories that we hold so dear. So, go ahead, do your cleaning and decorating and celebrate the continuity of life.

For all of humanity, food is one of the most potent bonding agents of the family. One whiff of holiday breads baking, turkey roasting, or pies cooling on the racks and we are taken back to all the special days of our life. Our sense of smell has memories that are ingrained in us from childhood. Enjoy the wonderful tastes and smells and be grateful for the abundance of your life.

Then we have Christmas cards. Yes, cards are wonderful. Every card is taken out of its envelope and lovingly placed in the home. Every card holds a ray of love and remembrance and best wishes for the coming year. We can all certainly use a good dose of goodwill just about now. Why not use every opportunity to send goodwill to someone you love? Similarly, accept each signature of goodwill into your home and send thoughts of love and gratitude to every card received and every card sent. The loving energy is contained in the signature, in the very words of remembrance by someone you have not heard from in the past year. So, pick some lovely cards, write some thoughtful words in them, and then send them with your heartfelt thoughts and gratitude. Your thoughtful actions help build a tapestry of love with everyone you contact. Remember that millions of Christmas cards float all over the world at this time, taking and delivering words of hope and good cheer.

The gifts, oh those gifts! Christmas gifts can be fun and need not load us with credit card debts that take years to pay off. Make your gifts meaningful and within your budget. Give gifts that mean something to you and to the receiver. It is not the amount spent and the size of the gift that counts but the thoughtfulness that goes into choosing just the right gift for the right person. If you are not excited about giving a gift, then don't. With every negative energy that you put into your words and thoughts, the cards

and the gifts, the foods and the parties, you are asking for the same negativity to come back to you. On the other hand, with every positive energy that you put into your Holiday actions, the same will come back to you. We receive back what we give to others. So, do be careful about what you put out. Gifts, cards, food, house cleaning, family meals can be a way to open our hearts and receive the loving gratitude of others if we plan them with this in mind.

But if we stay only on the material side, our hearts will flutter in happiness for a few days and then we will go on with our business lamenting the stress of the Holidays and the debts we have incurred, bemoaning the tree that is getting messy, the trash bins that are too full, the extra pounds that we have gained, and decide that next year we may just leave the country during the Holidays!

It does not have to end there. We can actually enrich our outer experience if we take the time to cultivate the inner side of Christmas.

How do we do that? First, do not let yourself be exploited by the merchants of Christmas. Do not get excited and manipulated by spending money beyond your capacity. Do not cook, eat, and party beyond your capacity. You will have to pay for all the stress that you put on your budget and your body. Remember that you can choose to be sane, balanced, and provide for others within your capacity. No one is holding a gun to your head and forcing you to do things that you cannot do. People who approach the Holidays with dread and negativity are those who spend, give, and do beyond their capacity. The Holidays become a severe burden rather than a time to rejoice.

Holidays are days that are celebrated by millions of people all around the world. This is a perfect time to remember the brotherhood of humanity. Although we have hatreds that run deep in our psyche, why not call this day a “Holy Day” and put your hatreds aside? Take the time to understand that every human being on earth wants the same thing that you do, although expressed differently. Take the time to understand what Christ meant when He said to love one another.

Take some time during the Christmas season to forgive someone. You can do this in the quiet and privacy of your home. Sit quietly every evening, and ask forgiveness from all those whom you have hurt in the past. Recall the names of those who hurt you and tell them you no longer carry a grudge. When you do this, day after day, you will see the healing power of forgiveness that will flow over you and calm you. This is a great method used by many therapies to heal the wounded emotions of a person. If you are not healed emotionally, no matter what happens in your life, you will feel bitter and ungrateful. We all know such people; it could even be us.

Take some time during the Christmas season to explain to your children the importance of giving. It is never too late or too early to teach children the secrets of success and prosperity. The secrets lie in giving and not taking. If you know of people who are ill and suffering, send them thoughts of healing energy. Pray for others and send them loving thoughts rich in healing, success, and power to overcome. Prayer is a

powerful tool to help others. Send gifts of money and needed supplies to any organization that has given you spiritual food in the past year. Share your abundance with others. Give so that your spiritual home is cleaned and cleared for receiving the blessings of the Divine gifts.

Finally, take the time to attend a spiritual event. Take your participation seriously and ask God to help you to live a life that is full of truth, love, and divinely inspired living.

It is the inner work that is going to sustain the outer preparations for Christmas. It is the inner work that will ultimately give meaning to the most simple and mundane tasks that you do during the Holidays.

Merry Christmas. May your Holy Days be full of love. May you be prosperous and successful in every way. May you have a loving family and friends that enrich your life. May you forgive and forget all the wrongs done to you and that you have done to others. May your heart be healed of past wounds. May the New Year bring abundant opportunities for you in every way. And, last but not least, may Divine Energy flow into your life and circulate in everything that you do.

All of us at TSG wish you and your family a most abundant life in the coming year.

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