

Finding Peace Back to the Holiday Season Through Mindfulness

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- How do you find some peace of mind with Covid complication and Holiday pressures?

Crisis presents a danger and an opportunity. Although many around you may be upset by current pressures you can take time to begin a practice of inner peace. It takes time to develop practices for inner calm but now is an opportunity to become better instead of bitter.



Charlotte, a forty-year-old Mother of three recovering from anxiety, described how good it felt to get a big whiff of the grass in her yard. Like many people who experience anxiety or panic, Charlotte could not enjoy the world around her. She often focused on fearful thoughts, which made things seem worse.

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Feelings of acceptance and well-being expand when you learn to calm yourself, live in the present moment, and accept faults in yourself and others.”

Dr. Linda Miles

QUIET THE BEEHIVE IN YOUR HEAD

Her problems became huge and out of proportion. The day when a small thing, like enjoying the smell of fresh cut grass, made the world real, she felt calm in the present moment. Charlotte began to learn how to quiet the beehive in her head and live in the present. She became aware that she had stopped smelling the grass as a teenager when she had her first bout with anxiety. Charlotte's life changed as she learned to become aware of

her surroundings and live in the present, and began to appreciate the small things in her life. She began taking yoga, listening to calming music, and learning techniques for deep breathing and mindfulness.

AWAKEN TO THE WORLD AROUND YOU

When she enjoyed the smell of freshly mowed grass, she knew she was getting better. She was able to shift her focus away from fear and self-doubt to reaching out to the world around her. Her inner world was filled with toxic gas made of past programming and future fears.

CENTERING IN THE PRESENT MOMENT

As Charlotte learned to remain centered in the present moment much of the time, she was able to reconnect with her husband. She needed internal freedom in order to move from ego to essence. "Feeling that we are continually falling short is like a toxic gas we breathe, making it difficult to be truly intimate with others and at home in our body, mind and heart" (Tara Brach).

"OUT OF YOUR MIND AND INTO YOUR SENSES"

Awareness practice allows you to focus on the present moment and fully experience what is happening in your life. Dr. Fritz Perls referred to this as "getting out of your mind and into your senses." Unfortunately, many people are unaware that they walk around in a state of fear and, therefore, live in the past or future. It is difficult to maintain a well-being if you are not able to experience the present.

You need a practice that helps you stay peaceful and centered so you can travel away from the rooms in your mind that are filled with toxic fumes of guilt and fear. It is possible to develop stronger boundaries to protect your mind from the negativity of others. As you release your mind from the grip of fear, you will find that you expand your ability for constructive problem solving.

THE SONG OF YOUR SOUL

Begin a practice of awareness. Focus your attention on simple everyday things and become fully present. Most minds do not live in the present. Most minds abruptly turn and undermine the chance of inner calm. Keep focusing your mind on the humming of life around you and away from conditioned reactions. If you train your mind to tune into the hum of life in the present moment, you tune out the beehive of negative thoughts. When you develop a deliberate practice, you can smell, touch, and really experience the moment.

In the depth of winter I finally learned there was within me an invincible summer. (Albert Camus)

Your Turn

Take a moment and look around your house or yard. What draws your attention? Focus on an object or person. Look at it as you never have before, look for details, and ask yourself what you really see. For example, you may see a plant and allow your consciousness to focus on the color

green and the lustrous leaves or their shapes. See what you see, hear what you hear, smell what you smell, and touch what you touch. Bring your awareness into your senses.

Try a walking practice for a few minutes, allowing your attention to remain focused on the experience of nature around you. Your mind may wander, but that is OK. Redirect your attention to what you see, hear, feel, touch. A practice of awareness is like training a puppy. You keep bringing your attention back from distractions. You notice a wandering thought then redirect attention through your senses. Train your brain to relax and notice the world around you. You will find that this focus brings a deeper experience of the moment, and builds into a practice. You might also want to repeat a phrase such as "Be calm." Say the word "be" as you breathe in and "calm" as you breathe out. Replace your beehive brain with the peace of mind that comes with surrendering to the moment.

How can you be more aware of the touch, smell, looks, and feelings that you have when you are with your partner? Think about how you could increase awareness. By developing your senses for things around you in the natural world, your senses can expand toward feelings for yourself and others in the present moment. Feelings of acceptance and well-being expand when you learn to calm yourself, live in the present moment, and accept faults in yourself and others.

Dr. Miles has a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology and has worked as a psychotherapist for 35 years. Her first book, *The New Marriage*, written with her husband, Robert Miles, M.D., won a literary prize as a finalist for Forward Non-fiction Book of the Year. She has published several books on relationships and mindfulness, as well as articles in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Boston Globe*, *Reuters*, and *Miami Herald*.

Dr. Linda Miles
Miles and Associates
+1 850 321 6612

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