



# THERAPY NEWS

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## Reclaim the Holidays!

November 2010  
Volume VIII, Issue IV

Recent news reports confirm retailers are optimistic about holiday sales, but surveyed shoppers say they will be more fugal this year when it comes to holiday spending due to the economy (AlixPartners, 2010). So, many will experience the stress of buying gifts with less resources. The Mayo Clinic (2009,) states that anxiety can spoil your holidays. How can people avoid materialism that creates tension and discover more practical ways to observe the upcoming season? To find methods that may create more meaningful times, take a moment to

consider the following questions: 1) Which are your most favorite parts of the season? 2) What traditions are mainly significant for you? 3) Which holiday rituals exhaust, rather than nurture, you? By taking notice of your insights into these matters, you can then begin to redesign this time of year to become more valuable. You do have decision power to include those pieces you love and play down customs that cause undue angst. Check your perceptions with others who may feel likewise about changing

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*Christmas! The very word brings joy to our hearts. No matter how we may dread the rush, the long Christmas lists for gifts & cards to be bought & given, when Christmas Day comes, there is still the same warm feeling we had as children, the same warmth that enfolds our hearts & our homes -*

*Joan Winmill Brown*



### Homemade Child Gift Baskets

- A sand pail filled with beach and sand toys, sunglasses, visor, sunscreen, flip-flops, bubbles and food treats.
- Fill a goldfish bowl with fish food, thermometer, gravel, net, little plastic plants and fish care manual.
- Magic! Fill a top hat or basket with trick cards and a book of illusion techniques.
- Line a wicker basket with bubble bath, shampoo, nice soap, conditioner, bath toys and wash cloth.
- Have children make these baskets for less fortunate kids to learn that.....

*Real wealth comes from what is shared rather than from what is received.*

## Family Changes and the Holidays

### Parental Suggestions:

- Most importantly, parents should set the mood for their children. In happy times, and especially when times are difficult, children look to their parents as a model on how to handle situations and manage troubled feelings.
- For many, the meaning and composition of the family has changed. If there has been a separation, divorce or death in the family in the past year, the holidays can be especially painful. The first occurrence of a holiday is often the most difficult. It is important to acknowledge the loss and resulting changes.

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As of December 1st, please note new

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## Resources

Holiday Coping:

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/holiday-coping.aspx>

**HAVE SOME COOL WINTER FUN!**



*Happy Holidays to One and All*

the manner in which the holidays are choreographed. More individuals *than you may guess* could be interested in investigating alternative ideas on giving gifts (or not,) entertaining, reducing waste and thinking more locally. Some folks may consider purchasing functional gifts for others' homes. In light of the economy, useful offerings are welcome, as more folks are now frugal in buying practical items. Household goods, such as new towels, blankets and favorite foods are appreciated. Clothing items, like attractive sweaters, hats and gloves for cold weather, are good ideas. Put together holiday gift baskets of hand-made soaps, herbal sachets, organic candies, canned fruits and vegetables or baked goods. Craft gifts of home-produced bath salts, potpourri or holiday wreaths are enjoyable to create and give a personal touch. Use a quality 'Fair Trade' basket with hand-made ribbons in which to put all your goodies for special people. Second-hand items are still in vogue and this is a way to make a more mindful individual choice for a friend or relative. Buy environmentally-friendly gifts. Consider going 'green' in the season of red and green, such as giving presents of gardening tools for those who are now interested in community gardening. Shop locally; breathe in the crisp winter

air by shopping the privately-owned stores for unique gifts that can support the neighborhood. This avoids the crazy mall scene and allows a slower pace while smelling aromas from coffee shops and hearing sidewalk music. Take charge of your finances to create meaning by opting for the gift of *experience*. You may boycott buying presents altogether! Make a tradition of visiting a state park during the holidays to commune with nature. Enjoy family time in an inexpensive, quiet cabin sans electronics while encouraging conversation and games. Your special gift to friends and family could be time, mindful attention and focused caring on holiday visits. Parents can use the season to cultivate the joys of giving. Projects such as charity donations can be a family custom creating seasonal continuity. Starting a coin collection for local toy funds, gathering warm clothes for needy folks or delivering holiday meals to a sick person are examples of benevolent activities. Focusing on religious, cultural or historical aspects of a holiday provides a vital connection to the past. Holidays offer opportunities to ponder the larger spiritual or personal value of these events.