



# Newsletter

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## Christmas Happiness and Psychological Health Through Giving



By Bernadette Dimitrov

Christmas is a time for giving and giving is the act of generosity. It nourishes love in our relationships and builds the human spirit. Research shows that people who give without expectation and who do not feel diminished by the act of giving are the most psychologically healthy in our society today. Here are seven benefits of giving:

1. Builds Relationships - giving reinforces appreciations and acknowledgement of each other and thus is an important ingredient for building relationships.
2. Deepens Relationships - by sharing past and future thoughts we give of our selves in an intimate way. It can be a wonderful ritual such as at Christmas to come together and openly give and share feelings, experiences and wishes for the coming year. This deepens relationships as we share and express more of who we are.
3. Expresses Feelings - giving is a way to express and show feelings especially if you are not comfortable expressing feelings through words. Giving is an opportunity to express a whole range of feelings such as gratitude, appreciations and thanks.

4. Creates Memories - through giving we have many ways to create and leave lasting memories. Our willingness to care, show interest, give time, loyalty, honesty and by going out of our way to do something extra for someone else such as preparing a special meal, writing a special verse on why we love and cherish someone or making a special gift as a symbol of our love, are some of the ways we can give and create lasting memories.

5. Creates Predictability - we all love predictability; especially children as it gives them a sense of security. Through the predictable act of giving especially at birthdays and Christmas celebrations, the expectation of appreciations, acknowledgement, love and being made to feel extra special is created by the ritual of giving.

6. De-stressor - giving is all about looking outside of ourselves with no expectation of anything in return. It is putting others first for concentrated moments in time. The ritual of giving takes the focus off ourselves and our stresses in life are handled with a more balanced focus.

7. Creates Miracles - connecting into the community by giving has huge benefits. It reinforces love in all our lives. It creates leverage which creates miracles when together we give for the greater good



Giving is an expression of our love. We give in many ways with our supportive words, our listening, attention and giving of our time and of course through material giving too. Giving materially, emotionally and physically is the glue that holds people together and is a way to renew our love for one another, create lasting cherished memories, deepen relationships and create psychological health and happiness for ourselves!

<http://www.santaspostbag.co.uk/christmas-articles.shtml>



# 7 TIPS FOR WINTER HEALTH



**In winter, the sun sets earlier, a chill fills the air, and we spend less time outside being active and more time inside eating starchy and sugary foods. Our hibernating instinct doesn't keep us healthy. Rather, our immune system takes a hit, allowing winter colds and flus to grab hold.**

**Luckily, there are certain things you can do to keep your energy up, your immune system strong and your body healthy all winter long.**

## 1. Drink healthy fluids

Sugary and caffeinated beverages can suppress immune-system function, not to mention cause weight gain and dehydration. Drinking six to eight glasses a day of water or herbal tea can keep your digestive system healthy, your weight down and your energy up. This is especially important over the winter months to help flush the system. Green and white teas are also wonderful antioxidant-rich options to keep you healthy throughout the season.

## 2. Get some z's

**Sleeping** is one of the most effective ways to refuel after a stressful day. Make sure to sleep in a dark room to ensure your body properly secretes the hormone melatonin, which is believed to help repair the immune system.

## 3. Avoid added sugars

In addition to causing weight gain, refined flours and sugars can suppress immune-system function. In other words, if there is a flu or cold circulating and you go a little crazy on the white sugar (cookies, pop, candy, etc.), you're creating the perfect environment for illness to strike. Turn to naturally occurring sugars found in fruit for some sweetness. If you crave chocolate, **go for dark chocolate** (minimum 70 per cent cocoa), which contains plant phenols that have been shown to lower blood pressure. Cut up squares and store them in your freezer. Grab one or two when you need a sweet treat.

## 4. Go for garlic

The sulfur-containing compounds in **garlic** help increase the potency of two important cells of the immune system, T-lymphocytes and macrophages, which in turn help battle colds. Eat garlic raw or cooked for an immune-system boost.

## 5. Eat zinc-rich foods

Zinc helps prevent a weakened immune system. Get adequate amounts by eating oysters, liver, lean beef, pork, turkey, lamb, lentils, pumpkin and sesame seeds, garbanzo beans and yogurt.

## 6. Favour fruits and veggies

A recent study of more than 35,000 Canadians conducted by the Canadian Community Health Survey showed that the majority of us eat fewer than five servings of fruits and vegetables a day -- **Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating** recommends eating five to 10 servings per day. One serving is equal to:

- 1 medium-size fresh vegetable or fruit
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) fresh, frozen or canned vegetables or fruit
- 1 cup (250 mL) salad
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) juice

## 7. Move it

Don't succumb to inactivity this winter -- hit the **yoga** studio, run on the treadmill or suit up and head outdoors. A brisk walk burns calories, gets the blood flowing and increases energy.

**And don't forget to watch your stress levels over the winter -- when we don't get enough sun exposure, mood and energy tend to fluctuate. Journaling, meeting with friends, enjoying "me" time and meditating are all wonderful ways to keep yourself healthy and happy.**



# Seasons Greetings



*Christmas time wishes  
For warmth and good cheer  
Happiness now and in the  
New Year  
From : The ARS*

