

# Will your relationships survive the holidays

Pat Heydlauff

The holidays are often thought of as the perfect time to spend with family and friends in a Leave it to Beaver setting. Is this a description of your holidays where everything is picture perfect? Are your stockings hung by the chimney with care, your gifts wrapped with beautiful ribbons and is your table set with your grandmother's finest china? Do your outdoor decorations look like the set from White Christmas only in reverse since we live in Florida?

Or, are your gifts still in bags scattered throughout the house? Are all of your outdoor decorations up but only parts of them are lit and you're not sure how to get the section of lights in the middle to glow like the others? And, are the ingredients for baking still sitting all over the kitchen counter just begging to be turned into scrumptious goodies for eating pleasure? No matter where you look are there reminders of how much you have left to do and how little time is available?

Rest assured you are not alone if this is how your house looks today. Most of us are in various stages of shopping, wrapping and baking. Some of us have not even started any of the above to say nothing of being finished. All of the expectations of family members and friends are hard to live up to if not impossible causing much stress within.

Relationships are often stretched beyond recoverability as a result of the holiday's demands. Is this year going to be different for you and your family? Have you promised yourself that you will not over commit, over buy and overeat?

Enjoy the holidays more this year by doing just that. Start by promising yourself that your relationships with your family members and friends are much more important than wrapping each package perfectly, baking one more batch of cookies or another pie. If you make that promise to yourself, you will automatically program fewer activities into your schedule and find more time to have lunch with a shut-in friend or to sit down and read a book to a grandchild.

Deliberately spend time with the family by watching favorite holiday movies like “A Christmas Carole” or the “Grinch who stole Christmas”. Not only will you make your relationships stronger by doing things together during this stressful season but movies like these reinforce some of the reasons we gather together and celebrate the season. Have children participate in decorating your home. Does it really matter if the tree has ornaments only three feet up because that’s as high as your four year old could reach or if the lighted Star of David in your window is at a 30° angle? Have everyone participate in the baking process by using the strong hands of adults for mixing and kneading and little fingers for sprinkling the colored sugar sparkles on the top of the frosted cookies.

The gift of shared time is truly priceless. Yes, we do want to have every holiday be memorable but there is a huge difference between being memorable and being enjoyed by all. Keeping stress levels down and uplifting your relationships begins with you. Make a commitment to yourself to have a simpler, more engaging holiday and enjoy every precious moment you have together with your loved ones. As a reminder, place a red candle in the south area of your living room or family room and surround it with symbols of why you celebrate the holidays. Burn that candle for at least one hour every night to help you focus on the promise you made to yourself and watch your relationships bloom.

Pat Heydlauff is the “energy specialist” and proprietor of Energy Design, an upscale gift and fine art store located in Crystal Tree Center, 1201 U.S. Hwy 1, Ste. 31, North Palm Beach. Keeping the principles of energy design and Feng Shui in mind, Pat has created and painted all of the artwork and home décor gifts featured in her store. For Feng Shui consultations, classes and energy design work in the home or office call her now at (561) 799-3443 or email her, [balancingenergy@bellsouth.net](mailto:balancingenergy@bellsouth.net). She regularly makes public presentations on Feng Shui; “Energy by Design” and has a corporate program on “Substance vs. conditional acceptance”. Remember, “Everything you say, think and do matters”.