

Home For The Holidays

As the holidays sneak up on us, we may anticipate the celebrations with excitement, we may be eager to spend time with loved ones, or we may dread the stress of trying to get along with family members.

Each year some of us plan and hope for the perfect celebration and we keep our expectations high in hopes that feuding family members will make up. While this would be nice, it may not be very realistic, and when not fulfilled could leave us feeling very disappointed. So how can we best enjoy the holiday celebrations when relationships are not in perfect harmony?

It is important to keep expectations realistic. If we imagine and desire everything be perfect, we are setting ourselves up for disaster. Most people who dread the holidays do so because their inner experience is so different from the fantasy. We want the occasions to be "perfect" and we want all our dreams – of connection, of harmony, of joy and of bliss – to come true. We can end up counting on the holidays to compensate for the rest of the year.

In order to ease the pressure, try to keep the focus on the celebrations and on sharing time and conversation together. Give yourself and everyone else permission to be less than perfect. Imagine instead, concentrating on being thankful for the time we do share with loved ones.

Anticipating the holidays with the intent of fixing broken relationships places a tremendous responsibility on us and would be too much for anyone. Remember that while these celebrations are special, it is still just a few days out of the entire year. While we want to try to work these relationships out, it may be a sound idea to realize that it may take a while to do so and that sharing the holiday celebrations may just be a start.