

Have a Healthy, Happy, and Connected Holiday

Barix Clinics

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At this point, you may want to sit back and let the rest of this crazy year slide quietly into history. Instead, why not finish the year with a surge of happiness, healthiness, and connectedness?



Happiness

Happiness is a state of mind, a choice. No matter what is going on in the world around us, we can choose to be happy. Suppose we intentionally focus on the good in our lives. We can then overcome the natural tendency to think about what is missing.

- To be grateful for the people who impact us in positive ways: family members, friends, teachers, healthcare workers, grocery store employees, delivery drivers and warehouse workers (What would we do without them this year?), first responders, and many others. Yes, some people irritate us to no end, and they tend to be the ones who get our mental energy. But instead, gently shift your time and focus to the positive people in your life.
- To appreciate the amazing things that our bodies and minds provide for us: the ability to feel, to think, to move, to hug, to create, to learn, to change, to adapt, to give, and to receive. Yes, there are sags, wrinkles, and cellulite. But, think of the billions of individual cells in your body. They are formed into organs and systems that communicate and work in perfect concert. Our bodies are amazing.
- To be thankful for the comforts we have. We often take for granted the roof over our heads, the furnace that keeps us warm, and the grocery store with bountiful food choices. As you go through your day, give thanks for the little comforts that you enjoy.
- Focus on giving to others. Reaching out and helping others lifts your spirit like nothing else. Find a person or cause that you are passionate about and find a way to help.

Shifting our focus to appreciation and gratitude brings more joy and happiness into our lives. Start and end your day by thinking of three things you appreciate. This simple practice can help you positively shift your focus.

Healthiness

We need to take a pro-active approach to our health—good health does not just happen. It is something that we need to work towards—even during the holidays. In the last few weeks of the year, vow to focus on the small positive habits that, over time, shape your health.

- Keep to your healthy meal plan at least 80% of the time, enjoying occasional treats. Better yet, enjoy a healthy version. It's easy to find new low-calorie, low-sugar versions of your favorite holiday treats online.
- Finding time to exercise or simply move more throughout your day will keep you energized.
- Don't skimp on sleep. It has a powerful impact on health and weight.
- The holidays can be stressful. A few minutes with candlelight and soft music or a brisk walk on a star-filled night can do wonders to restore your peace and sanity.



Connections

The pandemic provides challenges for connecting with others safely. But staying connected has never been more critical.

- The holiday season is a great time to slow down and enjoy simple things with family members. Sit by the fire, gaze at the stars, watch a holiday movie, make special foods together, make a snowman, or drive around looking at decorations.
- Connect by bringing out the photo albums or family home movies. Holidays raise memories of how things used to be and how they have changed. Using photos to highlight the good times you have had together as a family helps you draw closer.
- The music of the season can help us to feel connected. Many of the songs we've sung since childhood. Print lyric sheets to teach the younger generation classic songs.
- Connect through gift-giving. It is often the simple gifts we cherish--a special photo framed, an activity to do together, or a card telling the person what they mean to you.
- Sending cards is a way to let others know you are thinking of them. Show off your family and share highlights of your year with a photo and note.
- Technology brought us Skype, Zoom, and Facetime. Use them to connect with those you can't see in person.
- Phone calls are still a great way to connect during the holidays. Make a list of those you'd like to talk with, then call one person each night. Not enough time now?—put the calls off until January.

A little forethought can make this season extra-special, full of happiness, health, and connections.