

It's That Time of Year Again!

It seems that most of us are finding it hard to believe that we are nearly at the end of another year. Christmas is almost with us, and many of us start to feel stress at the mere mention of the word. Shopping for presents and food, extra cooking, social events, visits to family and still the normal working week to deal with. Is it any wonder that we may feel exhausted and overwhelmed rather than excited and happy? Is there any sort of answer to this? Perhaps the only real solution is getting back to basics. How can we simplify and focus on the meaningful parts of our lives? If we haven't been one of those organised people who begins present shopping at the beginning of the year, then can we come up with a general theme – e.g. Books, cooking, craft, nature, food, - make a list of who to buy for and just go out and buy – or even find suppliers on the net? Or can we make simple presents ourselves? Or donate to a cause on the recipient's behalf. Is it really the amount of time we spent searching and growing irritable that is important to our loved ones? Probably not.

Are we able to really cut down on the tasks, visits and social events that are not only unnecessary but we really don't enjoy, and focus on those which are meaningful to ourselves and to others? E.g. does the house have to be sparkling clean, or is it the company and love that matter most? Do we visit the neighbours because we always do it – or because it adds to our feelings of goodwill and happiness?

And then there is the food! Do we want to enjoy the pleasure of a simple meal with those we love, or are we going for the hostess / host of the year competition? Do we want to stay healthy, energised and optimistic or to fill ourselves and our families to the point of fullness and inertia?

A little thought about how we can simplify this "Season of Good Will", along with some quiet reflection on all we have to be grateful for in our lives can do a great deal to make our Christmas happier – and more meaningful for all.