



The Wellness Family

Dr. Brayton Keeps You Informed

Put the Awe Back in the Holidays

Doesn't it seem that this particular time of year has become synonymous with "stress"? From November through early January, our lives can be a little overwhelming. What used to be a time of excitement and anticipation has become all about endless checklists, get togethers and last minute shopping craziness. It's past time that we do something about it.

What is Awe?

The definition of awe is an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration, and inspiration, produced by that which is grand, sublime, extremely powerful, or the like. In other words, it's about being overwhelmed in a good way. Remember when, as children, this was the best time of the year? We didn't dread its arrival, we longed for it.

The time has come to remember what is good and exciting about this time of year and help others do the same. It's time to put the awe back in the holidays.

Be Awestruck

With the innocence of children, everything can be "awesome"; as adults, not so much. This holiday season may be the perfect time to change that. All it takes is a little gratitude *for* and focus *on* your family.

This holiday season, think about your spouse and children then make time with them a priority. Be mindful of the blessing of your family and plan some activities that you can do together.

For instance, include the kids in decorating the home for the holidays – both inside and out. No one is more enthusiastic about decorating than kids. They will throw themselves wholeheartedly into the act and seeing the holidays through the eyes of your child may be just what you need.

You can take this idea one step further by letting your children decorate their own rooms. Really have fun with it. Maybe they even have their own little tree. It doesn't have to be that extravagant. Just a string of lights ran around their window or bunkbeds being decorated with garland and ribbon can be something new and fun. Bringing the holidays into their space will make it extra special for them.

Every internet search for activities to do with kids for the holidays will start with decorating and baking holiday cookies; that's because it's a fun activity that can be enjoyed by the entire family.

Perhaps, you should make some popcorn and have an Old Holiday Film movie marathon featuring "Miracle on 34th Street" and "It's a Wonderful Life". If your kids are younger then maybe the movie selections are "Elf", "The Polar Express" and "Prep & Landing". If they're toddlers then maybe it's a "Charlie Brown Christmas" and classic cartoon favorites like "Rudolph".



It's never too late to be a kid again and enjoy the holidays like you did as a young child.

If it snows in your hometown then build a snowman; or, better yet, a fort and have an old-fashioned snowball fight (parents against the kids, of course).

The goal is to make your family a priority and not let the stress of the holidays overwhelm you. Put the awe back in the holidays by remembering the joy of this time of year and allow yourself to be awestruck.

Be Awe-Inspiring

If you get the feeling that it's all been done before, that's not a bad thing. Sure, it's probably true that your local soup kitchen has more than enough volunteers this time of year, does that mean that you shouldn't volunteer? Perhaps it's just a matter of doing a little out-of-the-box thinking; take a chance – you and your family can be awe-inspiring!

Those cookies you decorated and baked with your family can be wrapped in small packages and taken to a nursing home. Kids love doing arts and crafts – red and green construction paper and some scissors and glue can become something creative for that same nursing home. Many senior living centers are home to people who feel

forgotten, so some fun time with your family can result in something that will bring joy to a grandmother whose grandkids can't visit this year.

Is there a house in your neighborhood that seems lacking in holiday cheer? Go to a dollar store and buy lights and decorations. For just \$10 you can brighten that home by decorating one of their trees. Perhaps this might be another place to take some packaged decorated cookies.

Reaching out to others and letting them know that someone cares, that someone sees them, may be all they need to feel the awe of the holidays once again. You can do it, be awe-inspiring.

Be Awesome

Tom Robbins, an American Author, once said, "It's never too late to have a happy childhood." He meant that you're never too old to be able to go back to that place in time where you could bounce back from every negative thing that touches you. It also means that it's never too late to be a kid again and enjoy the holidays like you did as a young child. It's possible to find this time of year as awesome as you once did when you were little, with the wisdom to know its amazing impact.

If you think back to that time, there may be one or two things that made the holidays so amazing. First, no school and no homework may have meant staying up late and sleeping in. Second, and probably the biggest, lots of presents to open. Now, take a moment to think back and consider something that made the holidays not so great. Did your parents have to work longer hours? Was there a gift that you really wanted that you never got? Was there something about this time of year that you didn't like? Could it be that one or more of those things is true for one of your kids? Consider these questions and now you have an idea how to put the awe back in the holidays for someone you love.

If your job requires longer hours during the holidays, then do what you can to make the time you are home extra special. It could just be a matter of starting a family tradition including the kids that puts the focus back on how bright this time of year truly can be. It doesn't have to be complex, simply reading 'Twas the Night Before Christmas before bedtime can become a simple tradition that your kids will appreciate.

Without letting them in on the reason why, find out if your spouse, your parents or one of your kids has a gift that they really wanted but never got. This bit of "spying" can be accomplished by making it a casual conversation. Just a simple, "I was thinking about the movie the Santa Clause the other day, remember that one character didn't like Christmas so much because he didn't get the whistle he wanted? That reminded me that I always wanted that one toy, how about you? Was there something you wanted that Santa never brought you?" After collecting your data, it's time to hit eBay, Amazon or wherever else you might find that item. Imagine the surprise on your spouse's, parent's or child's face when they get that one gift they always wanted. It's not just going to be awesome – but it's going to feel awesome.

In Summary

This time of year is going to have a bit of stress, that's to be expected. The important thing to remember is that putting the awe back in the holidays is simple with a little mindfulness and gratitude: focus on the joy, the fun and your family.

An important reminder, considering all that there is to do, you want to feel your best this holiday season. Be sure to make time for your regular chiropractic adjustments. When you're not yourself, everyone around you will notice.

May this time of year be the best time of year.



*Dear Patient,
Dr. Brayton is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. So take a moment today to discuss with your Family Wellness Chiropractor any concerns you may have regarding your family's overall health and wellness.*

This newsletter is provided to you by:

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