**We are Grateful – warming the inner hearth**

**with gratitude, love and appreciation**

**A Holiday Blog by Andrea Lieberstein - December 1, 2019**

We are filled with warmth and gratitude this holiday season, and grateful for our friends, family, extended community and you, and all that you are being, shining and doing in the world.

This time of the year, as we have entered the holiday season, is a wonderful time to practice gratitude. Sometimes the holiday season can be challenging, but there are practices we can do to keep ourselves more filled with warmth, love and gratitude, yet kind and accepting of ourselves when we are not having that experience.

We know well, it is an unrealistic expectation to maintain positive emotions and attitude at every moment, yet it is so easy to fall into comparing our holiday experience with others or feeling like we “should” be feeling something we are not or should be having a different experience or circumstance than we actually have.

**Savor**. Happiness research shows us it’s the little things in life that add up to our daily experience of happiness. Take time to savor the little things this holiday season – try intentionally creating a more relaxed pace and enjoy it, start that creative project you’ve been putting off, savor the spicy smell of fir and holiday lights, coming home to a warm fireplace, the smiles and laughter of children and friends; enjoy the process of taking out your favorite winter recipes, cooking and eating these special seasonal foods, sharing meals, crisp and brisk winter walks, and curling up with a cozy blanket and  good book, movie and/or loved one. Noticing and savoring the pleasant moments, even if just briefly, can shift your mood and outlook.

**Gratitude.**Intentionally take the time to focus on at least a few things you are grateful for each day. Morning or at the end of the day is a wonderful time to practice this. You can extend this feeling of gratitude to the little things you notice during the day too. When you do, savor and marinate in the warm and delicious feelings of gratitude. We can notice, pause and let go of our ‘taking for granted’ mindsets, our habits of moving too quickly throughout the day, or being distracted with our thoughts, to do lists and technology, When we notice, we can invite in gratitude, and savor in this inner nourishment. The list can be endless, or short, but the experience of gratitude isn’t about quantity, it’s about quality and gratitude itself, that counts. Feeling, experiencing and savoring in it over and over. Nature’s beauty, connection with family and friends, a great conversation, a delicious meal. What are you grateful for?

**Self-Care.**December is a great time tore-evaluate your self-care practices and how much time, care and attention you take to truly nourishing yourself. What is getting in the way; thoughts, feelings, beliefs, patterns, or habits from giving yourself the nourishment you need and deserve in different aspects of yourself and life? Try the self-assessments at the beginning of each chapter in the *“Well Nourished”* book, Part 2, to start the process of giving to yourself in a new way this year. Prioritize yourself, and everything else will flow more easily, and be supported by your increased well-being and resilience.

**Try Mindful Eating.**The increased amounts of food and sweets available during the holidays is a source of both pleasure and stress for many.  Pause before you automatically reach for a sweet and ask yourself if you really want it. If you do, consider taking a smaller amount at first, then practice savoring it fully with all your senses as you eat. Being present to the food in this way can be more satisfying and even have a surprise. You might find you can enjoy it more, at least at first, but end up eating less because you become satisfied much more quickly or even discover you don’t care for the taste anymore!

*We are expressing our gratitude to you with this blog on how to nourish from the inside out during this holiday season and giving you an extension of our ‘Early Bird Special’ for the upcoming professional trainings until the 15th of December.*

 Our trainings are designed to nourish you personally as well as professionally. The immersion in the new awareness, skills and tools that you learn will help you create new positive intentions and be supported to carry them through in your professional and personal life to full fruition. You can live a truly Well-Nourished life and be doing the work of your dreams. Perhaps it’s time to take one of our Mindful Eating and Living trainings that you’ve had on your list for a long time! Please contact us at andrea@mindfuleatingtraining.com to register or to make an appt to speak about the programs.