

**HO, HO, HUMBUG!!**  
**How to Beat The Holiday Blues**  
**By**  
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So 'tis the season to be jolly.. and you are anything but! Don't feel alone. More people experience depression at the holidays than at any other time of the year. The causes are varied. Holidays bring memories of Christmas past. If your childhood and past holidays were good, your mind will expand these pleasant memories so that they will become absolutely perfect - and nothing now can compare to the great time you had back then. We call this "living in the good old days" and it can create depression because you think things will never be as good as they were. Of course, everything was not perfect back then, but your mind will selectively block out those negative memories.

The opposite is true as well. If your childhood and past years were abusive or difficult, there may be a resentment or unconscious fear that the good times will never last for you. In this scenario you may feel an emptiness that makes no sense on the conscious level. You think I should feel happy but I don't. And the harder you try to feel that inner peace and joy, the more it eludes you.

For some the holidays are very difficult because of the loss of close friends or family members. In grief they feel a sense of loneliness and isolation. This feeling is also experienced by those who are separated from their families. It seems that everyone else is with those who dearly love them, but that family love and caring is gone for you forever.

So what can you do to experience the best holiday ever? We all know how to have a really bad day: Worry a lot, be angry or bored, and drive yourself crazy by trying to do more than is humanly possible. But what's the recipe for a really good day? How can you feel alert, alive and enthusiastic rather than completely exhausted and drained of all energy?

Scientists who study human behavior have found that you can actually choose to have a good day rather than a bad one. It all depends how you direct your energy. There are two kinds of energy: tense and calm. When you are tense, you think fast but your thoughts are scattered, your jaw and neck muscles are clenched, and you feel rushed and jittery. With calm energy, you can focus your attention like a laser beam and accomplish so many things for so very little effort. Both types of energy give you an adrenaline rush, but tense energy will disintegrate into tiredness and the feeling that your life is a mess.

Here are two simple things to do to create more calm energy at the holidays:

\*Reframe the past. There is both good and bad in everything and in everybody. Forgive those people and memories that cause you pain. You never forgive because the other person deserves it, because sometimes they don't. You forgive so that you can be free from the negativity that holds you. You don't need to talk to them in person. Have that conversation with them in your mind and watch the calm energy grow within you.

\*Give up all expectations. When we are unrealistic about how people will respond to our gifts and how perfect events will be, we will always be disappointed. Focus only on your efforts and give up all attachments to outcome. Do what you do because of personal choice, not out of obligation. Be where you are because you choose to be there.

**Dr. Darlene Treese** has been in private practice in hypnosis and counseling since 1983. She is a Diplomate in Counseling with the National Institute of Sports, Past President of the American Psychotherapy and Medical Hypnosis Association and Vice President of the Rotary EClub of Southwest USA. Darlene has been internationally acknowledged for her positive action and solution-based therapies and work with corporations. "A person for the people", Dr. Dar is always available to help with your questions and dilemmas through office visits, email or telephone consultations. Call her at **850-201-0073** or visit **[www.AskDrTreese.com](http://www.AskDrTreese.com)**