

November 2016

## Albany Acupuncture Health and Wellness Newsletter

### Stress Free for the Holidays

#### How to be Stress Free for the Holidays

Here we are at the brink of the holiday season and many of you have been through a very stressful presidential election. So, what can we do to help ourselves heal and enjoy this time of year? Develop a greater hope for the future?

First, acknowledge that just by listening to the news this year, we have exposed ourselves to a lot of stressful rhetoric, and we may be feeling ill-equipped to deal with the aftermath. A recent study showed that Americans biggest fear is of other people they don't know. The study also shows that we are healthiest and live longer when we are engaged in our communities, healthier, even, than either eating a good diet or exercising. That's powerful medicine.

This week, I've seen patients who don't know what to do and are exhausted from the election. Well, you need to rest, take the time to recover. Acknowledge how you feel. As the week has moved on, I've watched some of my patients refocus and talk about how they can participate in their community, and work with each other for change. Not just politically, but wanting to make the place where we live a better place for everyone. This is positive motivation and very good for allaying the extreme stress that many of us are feeling. The fact that people can change, and feel they now want to contribute to the greater good is uplifting.

#### Have a Plan

The first priority is our health and well-being. We need to get enough sleep, and eat well regularly. We need to drink more water, and get some exercise. Make sure you have fun and are able to enjoy the people and activities in your life. Go outside, look at the sky, or the "super" moon this month, play with your pet, hold a baby, hug someone, sing, watch a funny movie, do breathing exercises, or meditate. Schedule an acupuncture appointment, or join my next cleanse group in February.

Next, we need to listen to each other and find out who is in our communities, and what are their thoughts and desires. Find something to do that will bring you into contact with people in your communities. We need to be nicer to each other, especially when driving - ditch the road rage. Practice smiling. It always amazes me how a simple smile from someone makes me smile, and then I feel better. Be conscious of your breath. Use the 4-7-8 breathing exercise. Four breaths in, hold for a count of 7 and slowly let it out for an eight count. Repeat as necessary.

Now, think about the holidays and if that feels stressful then devise a plan to keep you healthy and happy through the next 7 weeks. What aspects of the season do you enjoy? Are there parts of the holidays that you can eliminate? What is important to you about the holiday season? Do you like gathering with people? Do you like to have special food or music? Do you look forward to giving presents? Do you like to put up decorations? Will you travel? When we know what we like about the holidays, then it makes it easier to eliminate the parts that we don't like. This will make for less stress if you make your plans now, and then you will be able to enjoy the parts of the holidays that are much more meaningful to you.

I hope that these suggestions are helpful. Let me know your thoughts and recommendations on this subject.

In Health,  
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<http://bit.ly/StressFreeHoidayTips>

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