



EXCEPTIONAL WOMEN'S COACHING

The Secret to Enjoying the Holidays

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The Holidays are upon us! This is a wonderful time of year with so many opportunities for gratitude and giving. AND, it's easy to get caught up in the whirl of activity that comes with the season. You know what I mean...the parties, the shopping, the cooking, decorating the house, sending out cards, visiting family, finishing up the year at work, the kids school programs. All of that and more.

You make massive "to do" lists and jam your calendar with activity. What ends up at the bottom of the list? YOU! Somehow, you lose the focus on your own well-being. In the spirit of giving, you concentrate on everyone else, losing yourself in the process. You look forward to the day when the frantic pace slows down and you can "catch up with yourself." You imagine the day when you can sleep in, have a leisurely cup of tea, read a book, go for a walk, enjoy the peace and quiet.

What if this year you prioritized yourself during the next few weeks? I can already hear the resistance. It sounds like, "I don't have time." or "What if I disappoint everyone because I can't accomplish everything?" Instead consider these questions. What if you take a new approach? What if you make room for yourself? What would it look like to put yourself back on your "to do" list? Here are some ideas to try:

Commit to taking a few minutes EACH day just for you. Some practices to calm you...close your eyes and focus on taking deep breaths, slowing breathing in and out. Listen to music that is soothing and calming. Get up from your desk and take a short walk, clear your mind and simply be present to the act of walking. Brew a cup of tea and sit quietly while you sip it.

Some practices to get energized...put on your favorite music and dance. Go for a brisk walk outside. Listen to music that is uplifting, joyful and inspiring. Go to www.ted.com and watch a TED talk that is funny, inspiring, fascinating or courageous. Get out of your chair and stretch.

Just five minutes a day will make a difference. In five minutes you will connect to yourself, take your focus off the task at hand and shift your energy. These few precious minutes create the space for you to show up in your life and enjoy this moment in time.

Receive from others. How often do others offer help or assistance and you brush it aside? This is a bit tricky, we think we want help and then reject it when it's offered. Here's an example from my own life. My husband, Chuck, and our daughter, Courtney, had dinner at a local barbeque restaurant in Courtney's neighborhood last week. While they were having dinner, they noticed a sign on the table offering smoked turkeys for Thanksgiving. Courtney thought this would be a great idea, since we have a lot going on and it would simplify Thanksgiving.



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When Chuck returned home that night and shared this “great” idea with me, I immediately felt resistance, “but this isn’t the traditional Thanksgiving we always have.” At the same time, I recognized that Chuck and Courtney were offering a wonderful suggestion that would make the holiday much easier. It took some time for me to embrace the offer and now we’re going to mix it up with a completely different Thanksgiving dinner. I’m sure I will be especially grateful on Thanksgiving Day. By receiving the offer for help from Chuck and Courtney, I’m actually taking care of myself.

Prioritize yourself this year. Commit to a few minutes each day to renew your spirit and connect with yourself. Be open to help from others. Give yourself the gift of being fully present in your life.