



FOCUS ON FRIENDSHIP: For a Peaceful Holiday Season

Whether gift-giving is triggering your anxiety or you long to be with family but can't, you can still bring joy and togetherness into your life this holiday season.

This **Find Peace During the Holidays** article from the University of Arkansas Family Consumer Science Department offers simple tips that will help you reduce stress and feel peaceful from within.



Remember, friends can improve your health and well-being, especially during the holidays. Spending time with friends enriches those personal connections that make our friends feel like family.

Friends from work count!



Take a look at Professor Brett Adams and Dr. Michael McConachie's friendship story:

Our employment at Collin College began in August 2004, when we met at New Faculty Orientation. Brett teaches History, and Mike teaches Government.

After discovering a shared interest in environmental history and politics, we taught learning communities at the Frisco and McKinney campuses during the spring semesters for four years. We have worked on college committees and discussed family and other happenings over lunches for 19 years.

We enjoy our conversations about American history, government, and current affairs.

This past summer, our paths crossed on summer vacation in Medora, North Dakota, as we visited Theodore Roosevelt National Park with our families. Our friendship has added to our enjoyment of teaching at Collin College.



Professor Brett Adams and Dr. Michael McConachie

Do you have a Collin College friendship story to share?

Tell us by completing [this form](#). Your story may appear in an upcoming Wellness Program newsletter.

Enrichment Pillar

How do friendships enrich the workplace?

People who have friends at work generally experience more success and are more engaged in their jobs. Ensure that your team has opportunities to bond, and keep in mind that it may be up to you to initiate friendships in the workplace.

Keep "peace of mind" with your fitness and wellness during the holidays.

- Try healthier versions of your favorite recipes.
- Hydrate! Drink lots of water to feel full and help with digestion.
- Schedule your workouts - even if it's only 10 minutes! (Check out [Burnalong](#) videos.)
- Indulge, but don't overindulge. You are more likely to binge if you try to deprive yourself of foods you love.
- It's OK to set boundaries and say "no" to attending some events.
- Keep your regular sleep schedule.

Physical Pillar

EVENTS

Looking for something to do over the festive season?

An amazing website to find Collin County and DFW area events is the [Collin County Events Calendar](#), brought to you by [americantowns.com](#).

Also, here's another [specially curated list of holiday displays](#) that will have you feeling dazzled and delighted! Events include Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and more!

Connection Pillar

Financial Peace and Preparing for the New Year

Very few things in life are as important as getting your financial house in order. While many New Year's resolutions dissipate rather quickly, here are a few **more** resolutions to get you one step closer to getting your financial house in order. Focusing on the positives and expressing appreciation for your financial life can improve financial wellness as well.

To make the most of this season of thankfulness, financial firm ConradSiegel have provided several ways to practice mindfulness and help give your financial well-being a healthy boost.

1. Be prepared for a financial emergency.
2. Create or update your will.
3. Review your insurance coverage.
4. Review your beneficiary options.
5. Be more charitable.
6. Check out your free credit reports.



Financial Pillar



Read the full article to see further details on these suggestions.

PURSUING PEACE

In this season of peace (Shalom, Salam, Pax, La Paz, La Paix, Pingan) celebrated around the world, we long for a time when nations will no longer be at war when neighbors will simply love one another.

The wisdom traditions of the world remind us that "world peace" will only be possible when each of us has learned to cultivate peace within ourselves. According to these traditions, there are specific principles, practices, and commitments that most effectively support our individual pursuit of inner peace. **Peace Mantras** are among these practices. Another practice often used in tandem with a mantra is mindful breathing.

Every attitude or emotional state, such as anxiety, anger, happiness, etc., is the manifestation of a syndrome of events conspiring in our body. Heart rate, blood pressure, muscle tension, hormone secretion, glucose release into the bloodstream - these and many more such physiological events conspire to generate how we feel at any given moment. For the most part, these events are autonomic and unconscious, occurring below the threshold of our conscious control.

Breathing is one location in this syndrome of events where we have some control. By taking in a slow and deep breath, holding it for a short count, and then releasing it slowly until our lungs are completely empty and ready to be filled again - perhaps as we recite a mantra or chant - we change the message being sent across the syndrome.

All other actions in the syndrome adjust accordingly and before long we are feeling more present, centered, and grounded.

As we discover and develop this capacity for inner peace within ourselves, it begins to flow out from us along lines of influence connecting us to each other, to all of life, and to the earth. **Read the full article here.**

Emotional Pillar

Season's Greetings From Your 2023-2024 Wellness Committee

Camale Allen	Dr. Lisa Forrester	Ron Reczek
Lt. Justin Atherton	Michael Holtfrerich	Kate Stowe
Dr. Meena Beri	Deborah Ingoldby	Ling Sun
Nadia Bilal	Jeanine Jones	J.C. Terrazas
Nichole Boone	Courtney Kelley	Amy Throop
Michele Culpepper	Meredith Martin	Dr. Michele Valencia
John Daniels	Joan Mendez	Dr. Allison Venuto
Dulce de Castro	Genevieve Northup	Dr. Juli Westcott
Dr. Cathy Donald-Whitney	Daniel Patyrak	
Dr. Brandy Fair	Karen Peterson	



Let it Go

Holidays symbolize many special things. Gift-giving and gift-receiving. Holiday lights. Hustle and bustle. Decadent meals and spirits. Familial traditions. Special moments with friends and family. Peace and joyfulness.

There may also be some tension due to strained relationships with family members.

There are many ways to navigate potentially difficult situations with family, and learning to do so may help keep the holidays as peaceful and joyful as possible. One of the best ways to start navigating difficult relationships is to be prepared. Set realistic expectations and also set boundaries and priorities. Know when to step out, take a break, and escape for a moment by yourself.

Holiday gatherings may also be a perfect time to try to reconnect with your loved ones. Breathe Easy Therapy Services offer **some great advice** on navigating difficult relationships during the holidays, letting go, and finding peace during the holiday season.

Connection Pillar