

Cancer Answers

Volume 2 Number 4
December 2008
Bridges to Beauty, Ltd
www.bridges2beauty.net
caring1@bridges2beauty.net

Surviving The Holiday Season

Navigating Christmas, New Years and all the festivities they bring with them can be a real challenge during cancer. I thought I would give some general information along with helpful hints and tips with the hope of making your holidays brighter. Much of the information will be a review - but nonetheless information that bears repeating.

It is very important to make simple changes in how you approach the next few weeks. This year IS NOT like all the other years. Be content to accept that - and not be hard on yourself because you do not make all the goodies you usually do OR you don't manage to get the Christmas letter and cards out in time - or at all.

You can make new memories this year! Some of the things you do differently this year may become traditions. Ask your husband, children or friends what one goodie they love the most that you make and then incorporate their help in making it. You will still have the joy of baking and sharing it with those you love without the undo stress and exersion required to make many different recipes. How about sending Christmas e-cards this year? You can take a few moments and design a simple one with a personal message, if you have the software and already know the program or choose a card from one of the free e-card websites. Just type "free e-cards" into your search bar. If these things are just too much for you to handle right now - sit back and learn to delegate duties more and be willing to accept the offers family and friends make to lessen your load physically and mentally.

With all the holiday parties and festivities, be extremely cautious not to compromise your health further when you are around large crowds. The best choice is to stay away from such functions just for this year. Instead, choose a couple of friends to invite in for a cup of hot chocolate and some board games. (Make certain each guest understands they are no longer invited if they develop a cold or come down with the flu.) But, if you must attend a function, take these precautions. Instead of shaking hands simply smile genuinely and verbally tell the person how nice it is to see them - or meet them. If the function is formal - make a beautiful pair of gloves part of your wardrobe for the evening and then you can shake all the hands you want. Use the same hand everytime you shake so that you can remove just that one glove when handling food or a beverage or when touching your face in any way. If you are in a group of people that you are comfortable with and who are aware of your cancer journey you can wear a mask to protect yourself. Have some fun with it if you like and try painting a pair of lips on it. You will find that when others perceive you are OK with your cancer journey they will be much more comfortable and willing to spend time talking with you about what you are experiencing. So, be the life of the party - all the while being cautious.

Finally, do one fun and simple thing you have never done before. That way you will always remember the year you did it, or the first year you did it - if it becomes a tradition.

Poems from the Heart

This is a beautiful Christmas poem. I hope you enjoy it - as we celebrate God coming to earth as a baby.

The evergreen cathedrals
Reach high their ancient spires
To catch the muted wind-notes -
Or is it angel choirs?
The starlight is reflected
Upon the tulle-wrapped boughs -
Like virgins formed from snowflakes
Renewing ancient vows.
The air is filled with incense
Brought in from holy lands,
Speaking in an unknown tongue
Man briefly understands.
It happens every Christmas,
And then the moment's gone -
When trees repeat the story
And pass the glory on. J.M.B.

I have re-written this New Year's poem to encourage each of you wherever you are on your personal cancer journey.

There will come a time to dream again;
The energy to take another trail;
The opportunity to start once more -
New resolutions make.
There will be passions to follow
That Christmas reminded us of,
So keep your aspirations bright -
Review them every day.
For God has plans for each of us
Such as we have never known -
Until His love reaches down to us -
And brings us safely home.