



HAVING A MEANINGFUL HOLIDAY

"It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year..." Or maybe not?

It's that time of year again, as we look to our calendars and see the holidays approaching. Holidays often focus on traditions, family, friends, food, giving, and special memories. For some, the thoughts of the holidays are filled with excited anticipation, happiness, and fond memories of holidays past. For others, the holidays may bring to the forefront a sense of anxiety, sadness, loss, disappointment, or even dread. Holidays have many different meanings to us. For some, the holidays are the high point of the year. For others, the holidays just don't seem to live up to our expectations and fall far short of that "Hallmark Moment". Maybe, disappointment comes in how things have changed and how different the holidays are now, in comparison with "the good old days." What is your attitude toward the holidays? Are you one who struggles with the holidays or who looks forward eagerly? As in most anything, our enjoyment of life all comes down to our thoughts and our attitudes. How can we, as one Christmas carol suggests, make this "the most wonderful time of the year?"

Let's look at 5 ways one can make the holidays more meaningful this year.

1. Change Your Expectations

Don't get hung up on what the holidays are supposed to be like and how you're supposed to feel. If you're comparing your holidays to some abstract greeting card ideal, you may be setting yourself up for failure. So don't worry about holiday spirit and take the holidays as they come. Simply

look for the enjoyment available in each day. By trying to take the holidays as they come and limiting your expectations -- both good and bad -- you may enjoy them more.

2. Start a New Tradition

People often feel compelled to keep family holiday traditions alive long past the point that anyone's actually enjoying them. Don't keep them going for their own sake. Why not try a new holiday tradition instead? Create one that's more meaningful to you personally. If you can't celebrate with your loved at home, like always, bring the celebration to them -- whether that be in a senior living community, a skilled nursing facility, a hospital, or wherever your loved one's can gather.

3. Find Positive Ways to Remember Loved Ones

Holidays may remind you of loved ones who aren't with us. But instead of just feeling glum, do something active to celebrate their memory. For instance, go out with your children to your loved one's favorite restaurant and raise a glass in remembrance as you enjoy reminiscing.

4. Concentrate on Gratefulness

You may be thinking that the only way for you to feel happy is for certain circumstances in your life to change. Studies have shown that a sure path to happiness is not through changing things in our lives or gaining what we don't have, but instead by being grateful for what we do have. Why not start a gratefulness practice? Each day write down three things that you are truly grateful for. Maybe you could even try doing this together with your loved ones. Don't like to write? Think of one thing you are grateful for before



each meal. Gratefulness changes attitudes and increases enjoyment of life.

5. Focus on Giving from the Heart

In a season where gift giving can be downright expensive, exhausting, and stressful, why not make a practice of giving from the heart? This can be as simple as each day making sure you give a sincere compliment to someone who crosses your path. Or how about writing a letter of blessing to a loved one? Maybe you could tell someone how much you appreciate them. As you practice this form of kindness toward others you will find your heart filling with joy. Whatever your circumstances and however you may feel as the holidays approach, [our] wish for you all is that your celebrations in this holiday season might bring to you meaning and enjoyment, blessing and love.

For the full article go to:

<https://www.umh.org/assisted-independent-living-blog/5-ways-to-make-the-holidays-more-meaningful>

Easy Chocolate Caramel Pretzel Bites



Photo from: www.crunchycreamysweet.com

Ingredients:

- 24 pretzels
- 12 caramel squares unwrapped, cut in half
- 3/4 cup semi-sweet or milk chocolate melted with 1 teaspoon of coconut oil
- Christmas sprinkles

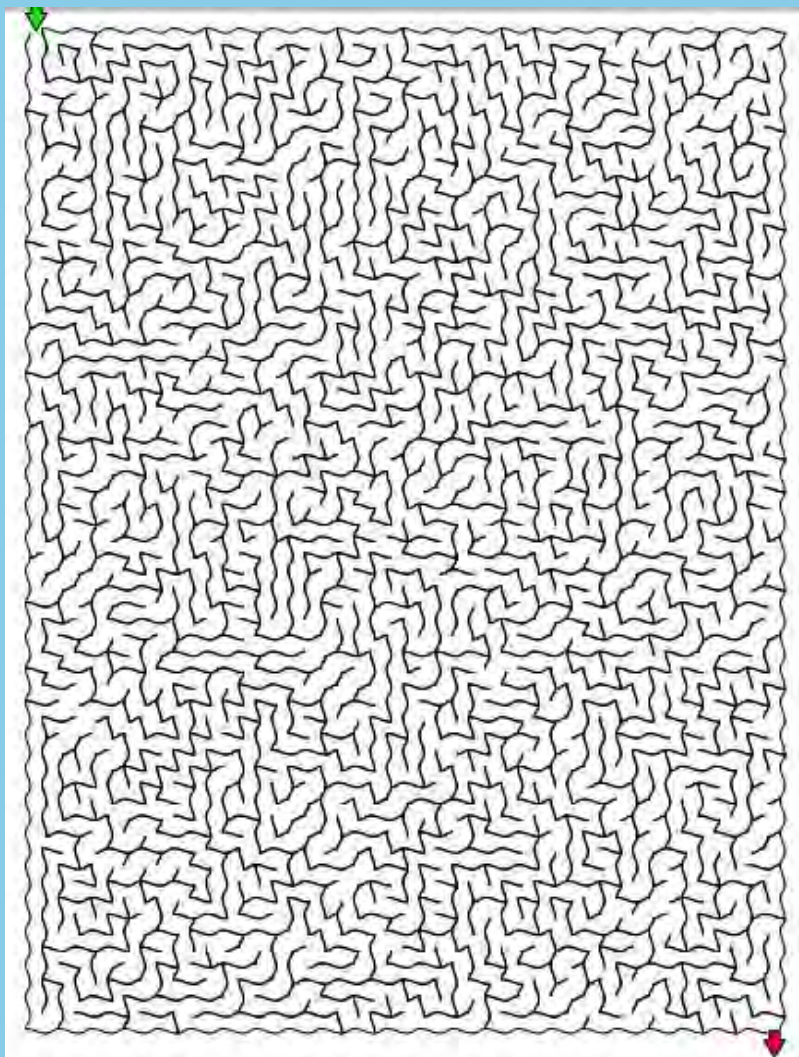
Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or silicone baking mat.
3. Lay all pretzels on the sheet.
4. Place half of a caramel square on each pretzel.
5. Bake in the oven for 3 to 5 minutes. The caramel will be melted but not completely filling the holes of pretzels. It will spread as it cools. Cool pretzels completely before dipping in chocolate.
6. When cool, dip pretzels in chocolate (cover whole pretzels or dip halves). Tap against the bowl with chocolate to help excess drip off back into the bowl.
7. Place back on the sheet. Sprinkle with funfetti. Let cool completely.
8. Store in air tight container.

Full recipe can be found at:

<https://www.crunchycreamysweet.com/2015/12/14/easy-chocolate-caramel-pretzel-bites-recipe/>

PUZZLE CORNER



<https://krazydad.com/>

FOR YOUR HEALTH

WAYS TO HAVE A HEALTHIER CHRISTMAS

- ▶ **DON'T SIT ALL DAY:** get out for a walk at some point-ideally, after dinner to aid digestion.
- ▶ **GO EASY ON THE ALCOHOL BEVERAGES:** those alcohol units can really mount up, do try to keep tabs on how much you are drinking.
- ▶ **DON'T GIVE YOURSELF A CHRISTMAS STUFFING:** instead of gorging yourself on Christmas dinner, eat a normal-sized meal and then take a 20-minute break to see if you are still hungry.
- ▶ **KEEP COLDS AT BAY:** minimize your risks by maintaining a healthy immune system (eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep and not smoking will help), so you are more able to fight off any viruses.
- ▶ **DON'T STRESS:** try to keep a sense of humor and proportion, remember, Christmas is just one day out of 365 and it isn't worth stressing over.
- ▶ **DO SOMETHING FOR OTHERS:** try to do something for others this festive season, whether it's baking extra pies for an elderly neighbor, inviting an acquaintance who doesn't have family around them to your home or helping out with a local Christmas [market] or carol service.
- ▶ **THINK BEFORE YOU EAT:** rather than mindlessly popping whatever is in front of you in your mouth, spend a moment thinking about whether you really want it, or are just eating it because it's there.

<https://www.realbuzz.com/articles-interests/festive-health-fitness/article/10-ways-to-a-healthier-christmas/>

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CALENDAR DECEMBER 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Rent Due	4	5 Exterminator	6	7	8
9	10 Late Notices at 10:00 am	11	12	13	14	15 Christmas Breakfast with Santa at Hillcrest Manor 9:30am-11:30am
16	17	18	19	20	21 Winter Begins	22
23	24 Office Closed	25 Office Closed Merry Christmas! 	26	27	28	29
30	31 New Year's Eve 					

COMMUNITY NEWS:

- ▶ Merry Christmas to you and yours!
- ▶ December 6th - 2018 Annual Christmas Parade in Downtown Buena Vista on Magnolia & 23rd St to 17th Street just before JJ's Meat Shack from 7:00 pm to 7:30 pm
- ▶ December 7th - The Annual Lexington Christmas Parade down Main Street is attended by hundreds of children who gather on the sidewalks to watch beautiful floats go by from all sorts of places in Rockbridge County. Everyone waits until the very last float carrying Santa and Mrs. Clause. Parade starts at 6:00 pm.