

Light Up Your Holidays



With
SoulCollage®

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The List

Make a list of everything you have to do to “get ready” for the holidays. Include what you WANT to do, along with what you think you SHOULD do. Keep adding to it until you feel you are done. You might need to leave it and come back to it in a day or two.

Note: Don't go on to the next page until you have completed the list. You'll be able to change it later if you need to.

Some Questions To Breathe With

Note: Allow the following questions to “bloom” inside you over the next few days.
You don’t need concrete answers that are written in stone.
Simply allow them to work their magic in you.
Sometimes all we need are the right questions!

Another Note: You might want to use your SoulCollage® Deck to help you answer one or two of these questions. You might not know the answers immediately. In fact, the question itself might feel foreign and strange to you. That’s okay! Just breathe with it for a while. You might not even discover the answer ‘til next year. Consider living with the possibility of not knowing.

Last Note: You could make a SoulCollage® card in response to any one of these questions. Or simply going through your piles of images in search of answers might remind you of some inner knowings about the holidays that you’ve forgotten.

1. Name a few holiday memories that you wish you could forget. What was it about these times that made you feel bad about yourself or dark inside?

(Remember, the past doesn’t exist except through the stories that you tell to keep it alive.)

2. Put your hand over your heart and remember a few times during past holidays that made you feel alive, loved, blessed, cherished. Bathe your heart in these memories.

3. Is there anything you complain about year after year?

4. What do you want more of during this holiday season?

5. What do you want less of during this holiday season?

6. What do you most want to give?

7. What do you most want to receive?

8. What brings light to you during the first 11 months of the year?

9. What brings light to you during the holiday season?

10. What are your deepest values in life?

Ideas for Creating a Soul-Full Holiday

Note: These are only suggestions! Any one of these activities might be soul-fulfilling to one person, but soul-killing to another. Only YOU know what will truly light you up from the inside.

- ❖ Go to a holiday show or gallery night
- ❖ Drive around town with a friend or family member and look at the holiday lights
- ❖ Take in a special art exhibit that's been calling to you
- ❖ Ask a neighbor to join you on a walk
- ❖ Feed the birds
- ❖ Be open to new possibilities
- ❖ Volunteer at a soup kitchen or homeless shelter or Boys/Girls Club
- ❖ Send holiday cards for New Year's or Valentine's Day instead of December
- ❖ Create a special ritual that is yours and yours alone
 - 1. Winter Solstice
 - 2. Christmas
 - 3. Christmas Eve
 - 4. Hanukkah
 - 5. Story Telling
 - 6. Candlelight
 - 7. Warm soup
 - 8. Tree decorating
 - 9. Purification- shed negative ideas
 - 10. Singing Carols in the neighborhood
- ❖ Bake cookies with a child, or bake them alone with the intention of inviting your inner child to play
- ❖ Invite some friends over to make SoulCollage cards

A Five-Step Plan for a Soul-full Holiday

1. **Lower your expectations-** Be honest with yourself here and now. Allow yourself to fantasize about the “perfect holiday” for several minutes. Write it down, collage it, create a short story about it. Allow yourself to have the dream. Then, look at it realistically. If you go into the holiday season expecting too much, then you are setting yourself up for disappointment. For example, in my “perfect holiday” scenario, my husband surprises me every year with several carefully chosen, thoughtful gifts that truly are things I want. However, looking at it realistically, I know that my husband does his Christmas shopping on December 24th and (even though he’s incredibly thoughtful throughout the year) his gift-giving skills are pretty poor. So.... I’ve learned not to expect gifts like this from him on Christmas. And our Christmases are much happier now! (If there is a part of you that consistently creates high expectations and then is perpetually disappointed, you might want to consider creating SoulCollage® Committee cards for them.)

NOTES TO MYSELF:

2. **Gather up treasures from the past-** Spend some time looking at your treasured memories of past holiday seasons. Look at family photo albums. Ask your siblings and/or parents or friends what they remember about past holidays. Make a list, not of the memories, but of *the specific things that made those memories so precious to you*. For example, one of my favorite childhood Christmas memories is of the dollhouse that my parents made for me from cardboard boxes, painted thread spools, poster board, paint, leftover carpet pieces, and fabric. Another happy memory is of home-cooked dinners where my brothers and parents and I would sit around after dinner telling jokes and funny stories long after dessert. So... as I gather up these treasures from the past, I see that I can bring more joy into *this* holiday season by incorporating handmade gifts, humor, and leisurely family dinners onto my to-do List. (*You might want to create a new suit for your SoulCollage® deck. It could be Personal History, or Holidays I Love, or.....*)

MEMORIES I TREASURE:

ELEMENTS THAT CREATED THESE MEMORIES:

3. **Create a new intention-** Use your now-lower expectations and your treasures from the past to set an intention for this holiday season. Take a look at your current life and use whatever is going on for you now to help you do this. For instance, if I've had a difficult, stressful year, I might set an intention to have a low-key, relaxed holiday. If I've had a joy filled and successful year, I would be more likely to add in several social activities and have some more fun. Life coach and best-selling author [Cheryl Richardson](#) says, *“Think of your intention as an overarching principle that sets the stage for how you’ll make choices about what you’ll do.”* Write your new intention down and place it somewhere prominent where you’ll see it every day. You might do it by hand, or on the computer. (You could even create a SoulCollage® card to illustrate your new intention.)

NOTES TO MYSELF:

MY INTENTION:

4. **Make some plans-** Now you're ready to create your best holiday ever! Using your intention, decide on a theme for how you'll celebrate. And keep in mind that you can still *celebrate* even if you've decided to have a low-key, quiet holiday. A few of the themes that Richardson suggests are: *At-Home Spa Holiday*, *Holiday Getaway*, *Sit This One Out*, and *Connecting with Loved Ones*. Depending on the "theme" that you have chosen, think ahead to what needs to be done to make your holiday happen this way for yourself. For instance, the theme I've chosen this year is *Connecting With Loved Ones*, so my list includes: write family Christmas letter, address cards and take to post office, invite Jeff's grandchildren over to make cookies on Christmas Eve, buy tickets for *A Christmas Carol* with friends, and plan a family dinner for Jeff and his children. If my theme was *Party Hearty*, my list might look something like this: buy a festive new dress, create a guest list and invitation for our Open House, respond to Sarah's party invitation, be sure all board game pieces are present and accounted for before our family Christmas party.

IDEAS FOR OTHER HOLIDAY THEMES (go ahead, be creative!):

THEME I'VE CHOSEN FOR THIS HOLIDAY SEASON:

PLANS TO CARRY OUT THIS THEME:

5. **Celebrate-** Now your “work” is almost done. With realistic expectations, a clear intention and a plan that goes with your holiday theme, you’re ready to claim the joy of the holiday without allowing the busy-ness to consume your body, mind and spirit.

NOTES TO MYSELF:

WAYS I CAN CELEBRATE THIS SEASON
AND STILL BE TRUE TO MYSELF AND MY INTENTION:

**Now, go back to page 2
and look at the List you made
when you first began this workbook.**

**1. Take a bright colored magic marker or crayon
and circle the items that speak to your heart and soul.
*Only circle those items that light you up from the inside.***

**2. Without thinking or judging,
cross off anything that doesn't feel true to your heart.
*Don't consider whether or not you "should" do it....
you can change your mind later if you want to.***

For now, just listen to your heart.

**3. Add anything else that might need to go on this List.
Be sure you are adding only things that allow you to express
yourself from the inside out. Remember, it doesn't matter what
other people think about this list.
*It is for you and you alone.***

Print these quotations out on colorful cardstock and place them somewhere prominent where you'll see them often during this holiday season. You might even want to copy them several times and keep them in several places (night stand, refrigerator, car dashboard, mirror, bureau, desk...etc). Remember, this is *your one and only priority* during these coming weeks.

Celebrate this season with
every one of your senses,
and as many of the people you love
as possible.

Send the light within you
out into the world,
with your particular blessings.

---Meg Cox

Celebrate with intention.
Let the holidays
reflect the shape of your life.

--- Terri Trespicio

My Intention:

RESOURCES

Jennifer Louden's Self-Care Minder (free newsletter)

<http://www.comfortqueen.com/archive.html>

Some of author Meg Cox's articles:

<http://www.simpleliving.org/indexoth.php?place=archives/XB/XB2006fun.php>

Article: *Reclaim Your Holiday*, by Cheryl Richardson. Published in *Body and Soul Magazine*.

www.cherylrichardson.com



Thank you for participating in
LIGHT UP YOUR HOLIDAYS WITH SOULCOLLAGE

I am very interested in receiving your feedback.

Please email me and let me know
if this e-workbook was helpful to you in any way.

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