



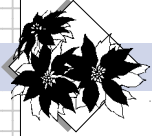
OUTREACH & EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
LINCOLN UNIVERSITY

Vol. 4, No. 6 • November/December 2002

Life Times

A bimonthly publication to enhance the quality of life of individuals, families, and communities

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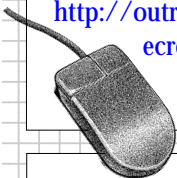
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We're on the Web!

This *LifeTimes* newsletter is available on the Web at <http://outreach.missouri.edu/cregion/lifetimes/>



Extension's Mission

University Outreach and Extension serves Missouri by extending research-based knowledge and high-quality educational programs to address the high-priority needs of citizens at the local level.

Where is the holiday peace?

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As we approach the holidays, we might want to consider whether the phrase "holiday peace" reflects our own experiences of that period of time from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. Or do we only recall the shoulder-to-shoulder-crowds, credit card bills for over-spending on gifts, the hurrying here and there, indulging in too much food and drink? Indeed, we might want to ask, "Where is the holiday peace?"

While we have time before the full rush of the season is upon us, let's reflect on past holiday experiences. Perhaps there are some things we can do to help us have the holiday peace we recall from years past. Consider a few questions:

1. What is one cause of seasonal stress you would like to eliminate or change this year?
2. Is there something you would really like to add to this year's celebration?



3. Can you identify one reasonable thing you can do on a daily basis to bring more peace into your life?

Share these questions with your family or friends, encouraging one another to find simpler, more positive ways to renew your family with peace.

Peace has been described as an inner state of alert calmness and vibrant tranquility. It is harmony between you and your environment. True peace does not depend on others, or our situation, but rather it is our ability to accept whatever challenges come our way. True inner peace comes with a quiet feeling of power and energy.

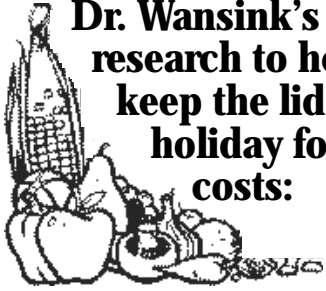
How do we achieve this peace? Here are some tips:

- **Reflect on what makes you feel peaceful.** It could be listening to uplifting music, praying, meditating, gazing at the stars, or walking in nature. Once you can identify peaceful moments, include more of those in your daily life. *(continued on page 4)*



Holidays

**Tips from
Dr. Wansink's
research to help
keep the lid on
holiday food
costs:**



Watch out for “anchoring” in the store. Numbers on signs like “3 for \$3” and “Limit 6” trigger extra purchases, often up to twice as much. Our minds “anchor” on the number, and we work from that amount, rather than our actual need. For example: If holiday candies are on the list, the “limit 6” sign might not make us buy six, but we may decide to get two or three packages instead of one. The remedy? Put quantities on the shopping list whenever possible to curb the impulse to buy more.



Avoid stockpiling. Stockpiles get raided. Stocking large quantities of an item does not make sense, either economically or healthwise, if it triggers over-consumption. This tends to happen with readily accessible, snack-type foods.



Be aware of the power of suggestion. If salad dressing is suggested for other uses like marinades, we might just buy an extra bottle. Money tied up in products on the shelf is money unavailable for something else.

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Shrink holiday expenditures with consumer psychology

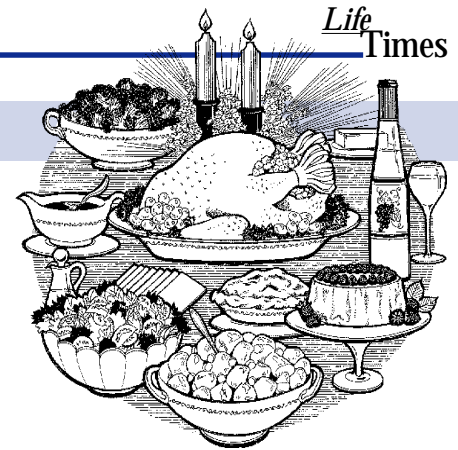
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Anticipating holiday hordes? Stocking up for incoming house guests, making food gifts or just feeling celebratory? The holidays stimulate all manner of non-typical buying that can put the household budget in a spin for months.

Getting a handle on food dollars can be especially helpful this time of year. But does that mean stocking up at the warehouse membership club and buying those super-size packages to get the best unit price? Not necessarily, according to Brian Wansink, PhD.

Dr. Wansink's Food & Brand Lab, a series of test kitchens and cooperating grocery stores, studies how consumers “choose and use” brands, particularly packaged goods. And while he may be sought after by large food corporations, Dr. Wansink is quick to point out that his research is just as helpful to the consumer. “Anything that can work for the manufacturer can also work for the consumer. I orient to the consumer,” he says.

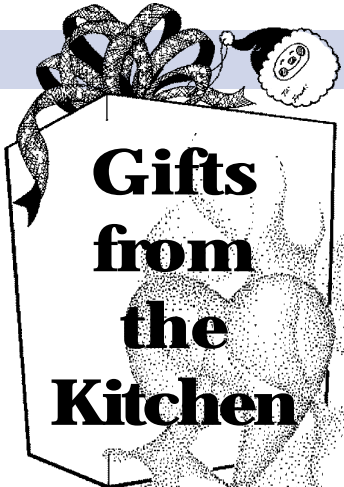
Dr. Wansink's research on a



wide variety of food and household products shows that we just tend to eat up the savings when items are in large packages—from 18 percent to 40 percent more! Study after study, the behavior holds true for everything from M&M's to laundry detergent. We only seem to be dose conscious about medicine and bleach, items we know could cause harm in the wrong amount.

In one study, Dr. Wansink and crew passed out free popcorn to movie-goers in medium and large buckets. The popcorn eaters did not realize each bucket had been weighed. Yet when the researchers collected the buckets after the show, those with the large buckets had eaten 40 percent more than those with the medium buckets.

Given the popcorn example, it is not too hard to see how subdividing food into smaller serving bowls would be useful to waist-watchers. The principle of measuring or re-portioning into smaller containers also saves money on food and household products all over the house, all year long. Super-size jugs and bottles are difficult to lift and pour just the right amount. Extra rarely gets poured back. Sometimes unused product goes bad before it is used, eliminating savings.



Gifts from the kitchen are an excellent way to share something of yourself. They need not be elaborate or contain costly ingredients. They should be a bit out of the ordinary and be something the recipient is not likely to make or already have.

Here are a couple of recipe suggestions:



Spiced & Fruity Tea Mix

This flavorful tea is good hot or cold.

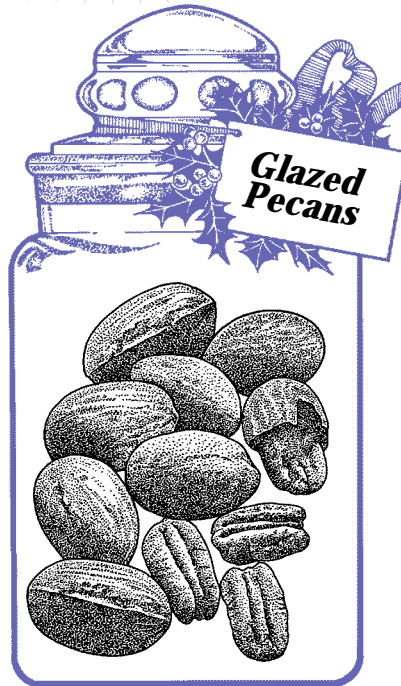
- 1 (15 oz.) jar orange powdered drink mix
- 1 cup instant tea powder (unsweetened)
- 1/2 cup lemonade powder (sweetened)
- 1 packet unsweetened cherry drink mix
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg

Mix all ingredients thoroughly. Store tightly sealed.

Variation:

Follow above recipe, except substitute different flavors for the cherry drink mix such as: strawberry or orange.

Directions for gift card: To serve, stir 2 tablespoons **Spiced & Fruity Tea Mix** into 8 oz. hot or cold water.



Glazed Pecans

These are very easy, delicious, and take only about 10 minutes to make.

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons unsweetened cocoa
- pinch salt
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 cups pecan halves

Boil all ingredients 3 to 5 minutes, tossing and stirring. Spread on wax paper to cool. Store in airtight container.

New resources available for grandparents

For grandparents, the challenges of raising a grandchild can be overwhelming, but two new resources can help.

A free 38-page "Grandparents Acting As Parents Resource and Information Guide" is available for grandparents and other relatives caring for related children.

The guide includes helpful resource numbers and contact information for services in St. Louis City and County, as well as Franklin, Jefferson and St. Charles counties. The resource manual will be available soon on the web at <http://outreach.missouri.edu/stlouis/>.

A second resource is a new "Relatives as Parents/Grandparents Information Warm-Line." This telephone resource and referral service provides information on public benefits, legal services, support groups and other community services for grandparents and older relatives caring for kin. Cardinal Ritter Institute and Legal Services of Eastern Missouri sponsor the project.

The Warm-Line telephone number is 314-652-3600, ext. 242. Callers should leave a message; a social worker will return the call.

For a copy of the resource guide, call the St. Louis County Extension Center, 314-615-2911.

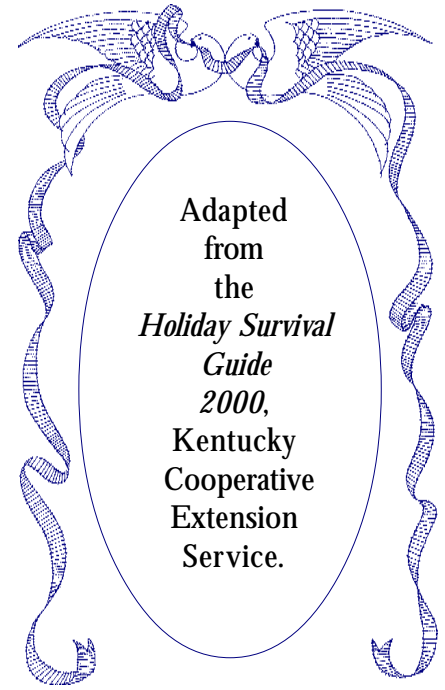
Where is the holiday peace?

(continued from page 1)

To abide in peace does not mean rushing all the time. If you find you are always rushing, break that habit. Add more free time to your day. Learn to say no. Keep life simple. Pause to smell the roses or cookies baking in the kitchen.

Scatter love and kindness around. Lend a helping hand. Spend some time with someone less fortunate, a shut-in perhaps. Share humor and laughter. It's free.

Schedule time to relax. Allow solitude to free the spirit of peace within and around you. Listen to the whisperings of your heart. During the holiday season give yourself, your family and friends the greatest gift of all: *a peaceful YOU.*



Tips from Dr. Wansink's research to help keep the lid on holiday food costs:

(continued from page 2)

Labels do sell. Eye-catching packages and labels make us try new products. Is it really worth the purchase? Will it get used?

Waste not, want not. Twelve percent of our grocery purchases languish on our pantry shelves, usually because they were special use, special occasion items for occasions that never happened. Holidays are a good example of a time when we plan to try out a

special recipe but never quite get it done. Buy more versatile ingredients when there is a choice, rotate goods on the shelf to avoid things lost in the corners, and buy "specific use" items as close to when they will be used as possible to minimize the chance that plans will change. Give unused items to the next food drive.

Get in and get out. Every extra minute in the store exposes us to more opportunities for impulse purchases.

LifeTimes is written by University Outreach and Extension specialists for individuals and families living in East Central Missouri. This newsletter is provided by your local Outreach and Extension Council. **Articles may be reprinted for educational purposes only. Please credit as follows:** By (author's name), (author's title), University of Missouri Outreach and Extension.

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