



10 ways to take care of yourself this holiday season?

I understand how easy it is to feel not so wonderful at the “most wonderful time of the year”. But wait, it doesn’t have to be like that because YOU are in charge! Here are some ways to help you be the best version of you this holiday season and the days to come.

1. Gratitude.
2. Read God’s word.
3. Take care of your body.
4. Journal.
5. De-clutter.
6. Respect your budget.
7. Forgiveness.
8. Gossip.
9. Self-Love.
10. Kick back, relax and enjoy.

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1. Gratitude - When you wake up, before your feet hit the floor, give God gratitude. Even if you are stressed or worried, think of all the things that are a blessing in your life. If you can't think of any then place your hand on your heart... and feel your heart. Have gratitude that you had to do nothing to deserve that heartbeat, yet you have one! isn't that something to be grateful for? This simple 2 to 5 minutes gets your day started off on the right track. If you don't have 2 to 5 minutes, then you might need to seriously rethink how you are living.
2. Read God's word - Take time to read God's word. Pick a scripture each day, read it one sentence at a time and let that sentence soak in. Ask God, "What can I learn from this scripture?" "Lord, please guide my footsteps today."
3. Take care of your body - Your body... well this one might suck to hear right at the Holidays, with all the tempting food around. "Nothing taste as good as being healthy feels". When we consume empty calories, it can leave us empty. We tend to graze this time of year and if you are like me... you may love to drink your calories with a smoka-loca latte or a pumpkin smunkin' cappuccino. Lol. For real, if you mention a salted caramel latte in front of me, my eyes glaze over and my heart rate goes up like I was just handed \$100. No joke, I love these things. However, I recently discovered how much sugar is in just one of these not to mention \$6.00 each! I feel so much better when making a healthier choice. I am certain, you will too! I am not trying to be "Dawn the Downer". I am just saying this season, give yourself the gift of eating and drinking things that nourish your body. Trust me, you will enjoy yourself and everyone around you so much more!

4. Journal - Ladies, for real, this has changed my life. Journaling 3 pages a day will keep the doctor away. It helps you get all that stuff going on in your head, out. When coaching people, I always suggest this. I occasionally, will have people say, “oh my gosh, what if someone finds it and reads it!?” Well girl, get you a locking diary, get a storage box that locks, or type on your computer and save with a password. I also get asked, “what do I write about?” Answer- Whatever comes to mind. This is a place to pour your heart out, cry, laugh, celebrate your wins and get to know you. Journaling is an effective tool for healing. You will be able to look back on your journals and appreciate how far you have come! Take the time, you won’t regret it!

5. De-Clutter - While you are pulling out all the Christmas decor, what a great time to get rid of some clutter! Now before you freak out and stop reading, hear me out. This year while putting up your everyday décor to bring out Christmas decorations, “kill 2 birds with 1 stone”. Get rid of some of your home décor, same with Christmas décor. If you are not in Love with it and it doesn’t bring you joy...BYE! If it is broke but one day you are going to glue it, screw it or sew it... I’d say let go and throw it away! All kidding aside, decluttering- You will find more time, more energy, and more freedom with getting rid of stuff. Decluttering is a form of self-care.

6. Respect your budget - Every year people go crazy spending money they don't necessarily have to. Buying stuff that people don't really need. Here is what I recently started doing for my kids. It's based off of Jesus, which is The Reason for the Season! The wise men brought Him Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. So, this wise woman started doing the same. Let me explain...

Gold: this symbolizes something that has great value.

So, my kids get to choose something they value.

"No Rya, you cannot have a magical flying unicorn".

Frankincense: symbolizes something that will be used during worship. This gift can be anything spiritual, get creative.

Myrrh: symbolizes something for the body. This gift can be clothes, earbuds, smelly goods, etc.

Then I plan a present for all of us to enjoy.

Looking back, I don't remember hardly any Christmas gifts.

However, I do remember the things we did as a family.

Experiences not just stuff. Try the same with the adults in your life. As far as everyone else like your co-workers,

teachers, neighbors, hairdresser, mail carrier... if you're like me, the list goes on and on. You feel compelled to buy

everyone you know a gift. Here is something that won't break the bank... bake them something like cookies,

sausage balls or trail mix. The Dollar Tree has cute

Christmas tins to put food in. Or you could buy some hot

chocolate and \$1.00 coffee mugs, put a couple of packets of hot chocolate in the mug with a ribbon around it and boom

you have a cute gift that was only \$1.50! One of my personal favorite gifts is just simply a card with a note inside that says

how you feel about the person receiving the gift. It's a time to tell them how special they are to you. This gift costs very

little but could be priceless to the receiving end. Enjoy more and spend less!

7. Forgiveness - This one generally freaks people out. Give yourself the gift of forgiveness this year. Forgive yourself of all the things you feel you have done inadequately. Let go of the pain, guilt, shame or anger. These feelings are not yours to carry. Jesus died on the cross and he is ready and willing to carry these for you. You just have to ask and let him help you heal. Forgive others who have hurt you. I know that can be easier said than done. But trust me, holding on to the hurt just causes your mind and body a dis-ease, which leads to disease. Forgiveness is an act of self-healing that will set you free! Give yourself the gift of freedom.

8. Gossip - We are to dance around the Christmas tree not gossip around it. Let's be real here, we have all done it. If we are being transparent, gossip feels good at the moment. When we are gossiping we feel connected to the individuals we are gossiping with. We use it as a bonding tool. Heck! we can become addicted to it, which is why it can be difficult to stop. I speak on this topic to students in schools and to adults. Here is my advice... someone who feels good about themselves, feels no need to tear someone else down. So, this season, when someone starts to speak ill of someone else... just say no and turn down the invitation to pick others apart. Politely change the subject to something else. Be honest and tell people what you are doing. You will feel better about you. Lift others up versus tearing them down.

9. Self-Love - This is one of my favorites. I speak on this topic and I also struggled with it for years. It is so important to have a healthy sense of self-esteem and love yourself. However, one of the most difficult tasks for women is learning how to practice self-love. What is self-love anyways? It is the act of taking care of one's self such as speaking kind to yourself when you look in the mirror. I use "mirror time" in my breakthrough classes and it is eye opener for how women view themselves. So, if your reading this- make a promise to yourself that you will speak kind to yourself when you look in the mirror. How can you look after something you don't love?
10. Kick Back & Relax - Let go of the idea you have to have it perfect. "Oh, I am preaching to myself here". Stop obsessing over doing it all. This year let's decide to enjoy the season. Focus on the meaning, which is Jesus and love. Love on yourself, your family and enjoy the time you share with them. Laugh and let go. Make this the most wonderful time of the year because Through Him, You're Enough.

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