



ANCHOR CENTER NEWSLETTER

Scott County Health and Human Services

December 2020

Putting Your Holiday Decorations Up Early Could Make You Happier

We can all agree that 2020 has been a tough year — so if you're looking to inject a bit of joy into your life right now, allow us to make the case for setting up your Christmas tree and lights ASAP: Celebrating early might make you happier.

feelings of the childhood," psychoanalyst Steve McKeown told Unilad. "Decorations are simply an anchor or pathway to those old childhood magical emotions of excitement. So putting up those Christmas decorations early extends the excitement!"

you're accessible and that people perceive those who put up holiday decorations to be friendlier. (Earlier this year, people across the U.S. started putting their Christmas lights back up as a sign of hope amid the coronavirus pandemic.)

According to experts, stores that stock holiday decor in the fall have the right idea. The secret is a technique psychologists call savoring, a way to fully absorb life's special moments. In other words, thinking about and planning a holiday extends its bliss beyond a few short weeks. One study found that anticipation in the weeks before a vacation is a big part of the happiness the vacation brings — and it works the same way with holidays.

"In a world full of stress and anxiety, people like to associate to things that make them happy and Christmas decorations evoke those strong



Another perk of decorating for the holidays on the earlier side? It could help bring some joy to the people in your neighborhood and help you make some new friends, too. The Journal of Environmental Psychology reports that decorating your home for the holidays tells your neighbors that

Finally, psychotherapist and author of 13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't, Amy Morin, also told Unilad that the holidays trigger nostalgia, which can provide some uplifting positivity, too. "Nostalgia helps link people to their personal past and it helps people understand their identity. For many, putting up Christmas decorations early is a way for them to reconnect with their childhoods."

Now that you're fully convinced to put this theory to the test by decking the halls earlier, here are a few more expert tricks to try the "savoring"

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the insults, judgements, and shade people attempt to throw your way are actually projections of their own insecurities and are absolutely irrelevant to you and your life.

Special points of interest:

- *Anchor Center will be closed until further notice.*
- *Like us on Facebook @ Scott County Anchor Center.*
- *Check out the December Wellness Calendar.*
- *Join us every Tuesday and Friday at our virtual WebEx meetings.*
- *We will be hosting the CMA Christmas Bingo via WebEx on 12/8 at 4:30pm.*
- *Laurie from Guild will be coming to the virtual meeting to talk about job hunting during COVID on 12/15.*
- *Scott County offices will be closed on 12/24 and 12/25 in observance for Christmas. Merry Christmas!*
- *On 12/29 we will be talking about New Years resolutions at the WebEx meeting.*

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Find Your Happy Place

TIPS TO REDUCE COVID-19 STRESS

1. Focus on what you can control— including your thoughts, behaviors
2. Remember that you are resilient, and so is humankind. We will get through this.
3. Do what you can to reduce your risk; take comfort that you are caring for yourself and others.
4. Use technology to connect with others frequently.
5. Look for the good stuff; the helpers, time with family, and opportunities to pull together. Write down three things you are grateful for each day.
6. Limit exposure to news or social media updates.
7. Use reputable sources of news, avoid speculation and rumors.
8. Model peaceful behavior for those around you. Remember everyone experiences stress in different ways.
9. Don't let fear influence your decisions, such as hoarding supplies.
10. Be gentle with yourself and others.



11. Create a regular routine, especially for children and work from home.
12. Maintaining a healthy diet and exercise routines to help your immune system and mental health.
13. Spend time in nature while adhering to social distancing guidelines.
14. Reflect on your reactions. Many who have experienced trauma may be triggered by feelings of powerlessness. Understanding what you are feeling can help you consider how you want to respond to the triggers.
15. Practice meditation, yoga, or other mind-body techniques. Find apps or online videos to help.
16. Reach out if you need to talk. There are local and national hotlines and warmlines that can help!

DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE
1-800-985-5990*
TalkWithUs TEXT 66746

What's your Christmas Elf Name?

The 1st letter of your First name is:

A - Perky	H - Tootsie	O - Elfie	V - Happy
B - Nipper	I - Kringle	P - Jingle	W - Festive
C - Glitzy	J - Pudding	Q - Kringle	X - Evergreen
D - Happy	K - Cookie	R - Speedy	Y - Pinky
E - Squeazy	L - Tinker	S - Cookie	Z - Jolly
F - Tiny	M - Pixie	T - Sugarplum	
G - Stampy	N - Buddy	U - Twinkle	

The month you were born in:

Jan - Angel-Eyes	Jul - Festive-Fingers
Feb - Floppy-Feet	Aug - Sugar-Socks
Mar - Tinsel-Shoes	Sep - Pickle-Pants
Apr - Pointy-Ears	Oct - Sparkly-Nose
May - Snow-Bum	Nov - McJingles
June - Glitter-Balls	Dec - Twinkle-Toes

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Green Bean Casserole

INGREDIENTS:

1 can (10 1/2 ounces)
Campbell's® Condensed
Cream of Mushroom Soup
1/2 cup milk
1 teaspoon soy sauce

1 dash black pepper
4 cups cooked cut green
beans
1 1/3 cups French's® French
Fried Onions

DIRECTIONS:

1. Stir the soup, milk, soy sauce, black pepper, beans and 2/3 cup onions in a 1 1/2-quart casserole.
2. Bake at 350°F. for 25 minutes or until the bean mixture is hot and bubbling. Stir the bean mixture. Sprinkle with the remaining onions.
3. Bake for 5 minutes or until the onions are golden brown.



Putting Your Holiday Decorations Up Early Could Make You Happier *Continued*

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technique throughout the holiday season this year:

- Have an intermission. Try taking a break in the middle of gift giving, or waiting an hour before serving dessert at your holiday feast. Even a brief hiatus from something enjoyable can reset your pleasure level.
- Create mini traditions. Engaging in a short ritual before doing something you like can make your experience even better. Study subjects told to unwrap and eat a chocolate bar in a specific step-by-step style savored it much more. Find ways to turn tree decorating into a fun routine.

- Take a photo...in your head. If you snap a mental picture of an unexpected delight, like your kid's face as she bites into a gingerbread cookie, you can replay those images in your mind later and instantly rekindle the positive emotions.
- Give thanks freely and often. Research suggests that the act of saying thank you can actually increase our own happiness by making us more aware of positive feelings.
- Treat joy as if it's finite. The awareness of an ending encourages us to seize the moment while it lasts. Acknowledging that your tree will come down soon and your extended

family will go home (Sob! But also, phew!) can help you treasure all of it even more.



Anchor Center

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Scottcountymn.gov



The Anchor Center is a community support program that is part of the Adult Mental Health unit of Scott County Health and Human Services. Before COVID-19, we had a calendar full of events to help and support adults with mental health issues. In response to COVID-19, We now meet virtually through the WebEx Application. We welcome you to join us! We meet online on Tuesdays and Fridays from 1:30–3:00pm. Let us know if you'd like to be invited by leaving your email address on the Anchor Center line voicemail (952)496-8666. We look forward to seeing you again or meeting you for the first time.

Holiday Tunes

- Away in a Manger
- Choir of the Bells
- Dominick the Donkey
- Frosty the Snowman
- Holly Jolly Christmas
- Jingle Bell Rock
- Jingle Bells
- Let it Snow
- Little Drummer Boy
- Little St Nick
- O Holy Night
- Rudolph
- Santa Baby
- Silent Nigh
- Silver Bells
- The Christmas Song
- The First Noel
- Winter Wonderland



S	G	R	D	A	M	A	F	C	I	F	Z	Z	X	F	K	U	H	J	X
W	A	W	A	Y	O	B	R	E	M	M	U	R	D	E	L	T	T	I	L
C	K	M	B	H	P	L	O	D	U	R	J	T	G	J	I	H	Z	N	O
Z	D	W	T	Z	E	D	S	Y	E	L	C	B	Y	R	T	G	C	G	K
G	N	O	S	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	E	H	T	I	J	L	L
Q	A	N	K	O	I	D	Y	A	L	F	D	G	I	R	L	N	B	E	D
X	L	S	O	X	Q	R	T	B	T	I	N	W	X	N	E	T	O	B	J
D	R	T	J	T	I	R	H	V	A	A	H	X	I	P	S	N	A	E	W
F	E	I	F	W	V	T	E	C	M	B	E	U	U	B	T	E	S	L	S
N	D	T	U	C	C	H	S	A	Y	A	A	I	N	S	N	L	C	L	Q
B	N	E	V	X	E	G	N	X	I	L	M	T	R	I	I	I	Y	R	W
F	O	L	N	I	A	I	O	Z	T	K	L	I	N	X	C	S	J	O	U
B	W	V	E	S	Y	N	W	K	M	G	F	O	O	A	K	T	E	C	N
G	R	O	K	A	C	Y	M	V	Z	E	U	A	J	Y	S	L	D	K	U
M	E	Q	W	Q	O	L	A	O	H	K	P	I	T	Y	K	B	N	M	Q
G	T	A	P	U	I	O	N	T	S	L	L	E	B	E	L	G	N	I	J
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I	I	Y	E	K	N	O	D	E	H	T	K	C	I	N	I	M	O	D	S
L	W	B	T	K	S	L	L	E	B	E	H	T	F	O	R	I	O	H	C
U	I	M	U	Y	F	C	J	H	B	X	B	V	R	U	M	Q	C	Y	B