

The Friendly Times

The Timeless Magic of Nostalgia and Holiday Traditions

The holiday season brings a sense of warmth and joy, often fueled by cherished memories and timeless traditions.

Beyond the festive decorations and delicious treats, nostalgia's a powerful force at play.

Delving into the past and reliving special moments stirs the heart. But did you know it also holds surprising benefits for our brain health?



Nostalgia and engaging in holiday traditions have been associated with increased neuroplasticity, which is the brain's ability to adapt and reorganize, crucial for learning, memory, and overall cognitive function. In short, it is an exercise for our brains!

The aroma of holiday baking, the sight of festive decorations, and the sound of familiar carols make us feel good, and these things are also healthy brain boosters!.

In addition, engaging with holiday traditions involves recalling details from the past, providing a mental workout for our brains. And the repetition and predictability of traditions are comforting and generate many memories. These activities help keep our brains sharp.

Another benefit of nostalgia, especially during the holidays, is that it has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety. That's because happy memories release feel-good neurotransmitters, giving us a sense of calm and well-being.

When we take part in holiday festivities, like helping to decorate, baking holiday treats, or singing carols, we feel a sense of belonging, like we're part of a community.



Kicking off the holiday season at The Candlelight Dinner Theatre seeing "It's A Wonderful Life".

Timeless Magic of Holiday Memories

Sharing memories and family stories with younger generations also helps them feel a sense of belonging because it provides a unique opportunity for family members to create lasting memories together.

As we immerse ourselves in the festive spirit and partake in beloved holiday traditions, we must recognize the profound impact on our brain health. Nostalgia, in all its sentimental glory, serves as a powerful tonic for our minds, contributing to cognitive well-being, emotional resilience, and a profound sense of joy. So, this holiday season, embrace the traditions that resonate with you, creating memories and a legacy of cognitive vitality that spans generations.



Sharing Your Memories

What is your most magical Christmas memory?

Are there certain traditions that have persisted for generations in your family?

What time did you wake up on Christmas morning? Was it earlier than your parents? Did they make you wait before starting the festivities?

Were there ever times when hardship made gift giving at the holidays challenging?

Did you go to church on Christmas morning? Midnight mass?

What memories of you have of those times?

What foods did you have for Christmas Eve dinner, Christmas breakfast or Christmas dinner?

Where did you live when you were growing up? Did you generally have a white Christmas?

Do you remember the first time you saw snow?

What was your favorite snowtime activity—sledding (or did you have a toboggan?), making snow angels, snow balls fights? Or how about ice skating? Shoveling?

All Around Friends Home



Barb is dressed for the season and Karen and Jenn enjoy a chat.



The best thing about making pumpkin cheesecake is getting to eat what you've made!



Game day with guests is the best way to spend an afternoon!



And Linden Hall

We get creative on how we have fun here!



A little indoor bocce!



*A great way to start the day!
YoQi class with Jan.
YoQi with Jan is a Movement, Breath, and Awareness class that integrates elements of yoga, QiGong, and meditation to increase energy and emotional balance, reduce the effects of stress, enhance connections with ourselves, to each other and with the earth. Perfect for all levels and all bodies.*

Having the multigenerational connections is beneficial or all of us!



David contemplates his game strategy.

Happy December Birthday

December 10 - Dorothy Mehl

December 23 - Pat Branco

December 24 - Joe Saxon



Poetry Corner

December Time

When the air is filled with twinkling bells
And the trees are white with crusty shells
When the frost is on the windowpane
It's December time again

When the snowflakes cover up the sky
And little faces breathe a happy sigh
Old man winter's here to entertain
It's December time again

The mistletoe that's growing
Will soon be picked for showing
That lovers like this season of the year
Those sleigh rides so exciting
The fancy colored lighting
Are certain signs the yule tide's growing near

When the woodman fells the evergreen
And little carollers appear upon the scene
And the heaven's echo their refrain
It's December time again

- Walter Grieve



Christmas Word Search



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



BAKING
CHEER
ELVES
JINGLE
ORNAMENTS
REINDEER
SLEIGH
TREE

CANDLES
COOKIES
GIFTS
LIGHTS
PEPPERMINT
RUDOLPH
STOCKINGS
WREATH

CAROLING
DECORATIONS
GINGERBREAD
MUSIC
PRESENTS
SANTA
TRADITION