



The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe Newsletter

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It's Christmas season again. The media hype is on with its usual intensity. As a consequence we are bombarded with powerful messages about Christmas and the season ahead. Although I'm not one for negativity and denying the positives of Christmas and the good things it brings - there is another side to Christmas that needs acknowledging - because it can also be a very powerful emotional time for people - reflected by the fact that the rate of suicide is highest at Christmas time. For our well being and good health it's important that those emotions be acknowledged (and processed) so that they are understood, released and their impact lessened. One of the most powerful ways to do that is to share with others. It's an important part of life, personal growth and change leading happiness and fulfilment. So I thought I would list some of the hidden 'agendas' of Christmas so that you - if in unhappy or difficult circumstances this Christmas - do not feel alone or forgotten. And although a solution may not be possible - at the very least - you feel understood and acknowledged:

It's Not all about Money: Most people will agree that the commercialism of Christmas becomes, every year, more intense. But it's the deeper emotional impact of commercialism that makes Christmas for many people a very unhappy and stressful time. Advertising sets a mental standard that people feel they should aspire to or have. Not having or attaining these things generates powerful feelings of exclusion, isolation and even worthlessness. Scenes of happy families, sharing lots of gifts, lashings of food and drink and connecting with friends are designed to entice you - the precious consumer - into spending money. That's all. Money-making companies are not interested in anything else but your money. That's the whole point about advertising. Tapping into the deep emotional desires of the consumer is a sure way to boost profits! However it also extracts much more - things that money and advertising cannot fix.



Christmas Intensifies 'Aloneness': For people, very alone at Christmas without a menagerie of family and friends, money alone does not solve the problem. Advertising depicts scenes of social cohesion and happiness that are often unrealistic. If those set standards are not met we feel isolated, inadequate and alone. In fact the more commercial society becomes and the more unrealistic the advertising - the more isolated and unfulfilled people feel.

Unhappy Families: At the other end of the spectrum many people at Christmas are expected to associate with 'family' they would normally avoid during the year. Close familial relations in conjunction with alcohol and the inhibitions of Christmas will often manifest in disaster at the Christmas table. Deep emotions, feelings, resentments, unfinished business all arise to make Christmas a very unpleasant experience. In fact many people - in order to avoid the paraphernalia of Christmas - choose to work or take an overseas holiday. As the old adage goes: "You can chose your friends - but not your family".



Christmas Anniversary: Christmas is also a type of 'anniversary' that comes around every year that reminds us of the things we have lost (people, friends, possessions) over the past 12 months. It stimulates strong feelings of grief and loss - releasing the pain and feelings of association. This process is important and crucial to our change and should be acknowledged and accepted. It's OK to feel sad, it's OK to feel sorry for ourselves and its OK to not be jovial and 'in the spirit of things' at Christmas. Like all things - it will pass.

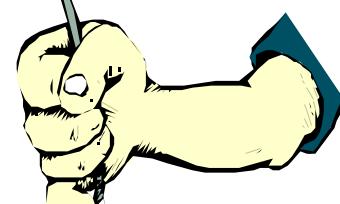
Unrealistic Standards: Christmas is a time of 'demands and standards' - some unrealistically set by commercialism and advertising. Children, conflicts with 'the other parent', financial demands of friends and family, personal desires, all lead to over-extending ourselves in some way - financially, physically, emotionally, mentally. Finding a compromise is sometimes very difficult or perhaps impossible. One of the consequences of Christmas often overlooked. Example: Commercialised images of Christmas at home with lots of family and friends and a glorious array of home-cooked food and goodies are wonderful - but require a huge amount of financial outlay, preparation and hard work (often days ahead). It's sets up an expectation that perhaps the home-maker and 'cook' may not want to fulfil!



Diversion - The Best Therapy: If sitting at home facing the emotional consequences of a Christmas not up to expectation is just too much to bare than 'helping' others is a good diversion. Studies have shown the one of the ways to find personal happiness and fulfilment and over-'unhappiness' is to 'give selflessly and without expectation' to whether it be a human or animal friend or the planet - quickly instil a sense of worthiness, usefulness and

most successful
come
another. So
GIVING will very
appreciation!

To Everyone - No matter where you are, what you are doing and who you are with (or not with) - Merry Christmas - and the very best wishes for 2011. **Pam - The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe.**



-Preserving Garden Produce-

The season is nearly upon us for preserving fruit and vegetables. There are many, many techniques: jam, chutneys, preserves, pickling, freezing, drying, jellies, conserves, juices are just a few ways to preserve produce for use through-out the year. Here's a few recipes:



Preserved Lemons: Sprinkle 1 teaspoon sea-salt onto base of a clean and sterilised 500ml jar. Scrub 3-4 lemons in warm water. Juice another 3 or 4 lemons. Cut the washed lemons into quarters. Place in bowl and rub well with approximately 1/2 cup sea salt. Pack the lemons skin side downwards into the jar. Fill jar with lemon juice covering all the lemons.

Add 5-6 peppercorns and a bay leaf. Secure the lid. Store in cool place for 6-8 weeks (until the skin is soft). Turn the jars weekly to distribute flavours and salt.

Apricot Jam: 1 kilogram fresh apricots, 500g sugar, grated rind & juice of a lemon
Method: Wash apricots, remove stones and cut into halves/quarters. Place in large saucepan. Bring to the boil. Add sugar and slowly bring mixture to simmer (to allow sugar time to dissolve fully) - stirring frequently so that it does not burn. Add lemon juice & rind. Continue simmering until jam is correct consistency (i.e. Test by placing a teaspoon of the jam in a saucer – as it cools it should set without forming a watery edge). While still hot pour into clean & sterile jars and seal ready for storage or immediate use. Other fruits can be substituted for the apricots. From 'Useful Recipe Sheet' downloaded from www.theshoppe.com.au

Pickled Zucchini: 8 thinly sliced medium-sized zucchini, 2 medium onions, peeled and thinly sliced, 1/4 cup salt, 2 cups vinegar, 2 cups sugar, 1 teaspoon celery seed, 2 teaspoons mustard seed, 1 teaspoon turmeric, 1 teaspoon dry mustard.

Method: Combine zucchini and onions. Sprinkle with the salt, cover with cold water and leave to stand 2 hours. Drain; rinse with fresh water, and drain again. Combine remaining ingredients in a pan. Bring to the boil. Cook 5 minutes. Add zucchini and onion. Remove from heat and stand 2 hours. Ladle while still hot into sterile jars. Apply lid.

Tomato Chutney: 2 kg ripe tomatoes, 1 kg cooking apples, 500g onions, 625mls (2 1/2 cups) malt or cider vinegar, 625g (2 1/2 cups) sugar, 45g (1/4 cup) sultanas, 2 tspsns salt 1/2 tspn pepper, 1 tspn mustard powder, 1/2 tspn ginger, 10 cloves.

Method: Blanch tomatoes in boiling water. Remove skins and chop coarsely. Place in a large heavy based pan. Peel & core apples, cut into rough slices or quarters. Add to pan. Add peeled and chopped onions. Stir in vinegar, sugar, sultanas, salt, pepper and mustard. Bring to boil. Add ginger and chilli powder. Place cloves in a muslin bag and tie to the handle of the pan making sure the bag is submerged well into the mixture. Bring to boil, and then simmer without lid for 1 1/2 hours or until very thick consistency. Pour into clean, hot jars. Seal. When cool, label with contents and date. Store in a cool dry place.

Useful Publications: **No. 46:** Preserving without a Preserving Outfit (using recycled jars) - \$8.00.

No. 49: Bringing Back the Beverage - \$8.00. **No. 52:** Salubrious Sauces - \$8.00. **No. 65:** Natural Alternatives to Sugar – includes sugar free jams - \$12.00. **No. 10** – The Humble Lemon: \$8.00

Download from: www.theshoppe.com.au (see page 4)



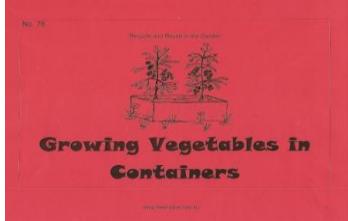
Old Time Kitchen Skills - Preserving Booklet Set

Back to the days when food was flavoursome, unprocessed and uncomplicated! Essential skills for every household.

Contains 6 Booklets: No. 46 - Preserving without a Preserving Outfit, No. 52 - Salubrious Sauces, No. 49 - Bringing Back to Beverage, , No. 72 – Drying Food, No. 73 – Food Storage Techniques, No. 74 – Ways with Fruit.

Price: \$42.00 - Download from www.theshoppe.com.au

New Booklet Titles



As mentioned last Shoppe Newsletter there are four new booklet titles now available to add to your collection. More titles are planned for early 2011.

No. 76: Growing Tomatoes in Containers - Price: \$8.00



No. 77: Recycling Rags – Price: \$12.00

No. 78: Companion Planting in the Garden - Price: \$8.00

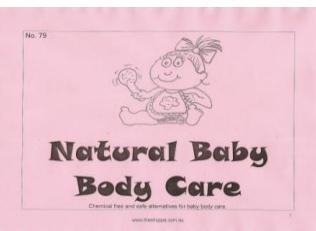
No. 79: Natural Baby Body Care - Price: \$12.00

All Booklets available for instant download



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Green Cleaning Chart

Item	Cleaning Method
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Kitchen:

Oven Cleaner	Scrub with bicarb soda & water OR vinegar paste
Dish Detergent	Soap jelly* (1/4 cup) OR grated soap (2 tablespoons)
Surface Cleaner	Vinegar (in spray bottle) OR All Purpose Spray*
Floor Cleaner	Boiling Water with vinegar & bicarb soda OR soap jelly* (1/2 cup)
Abrasive Cleaner	Bicarb soda OR salt
Drain Cleaner	1/4 cup bicarb soda with 1/2 cup vinegar - followed by boiling water. Plunge if necessary. OR combination salt & vinegar
Drain Deodoriser	5-6 drops eucalyptus oil OR 1/2 cup vinegar or 1/4 cup bicarb soda

Laundry/Bathroom

Laundry detergent	1 cup soap jelly* OR 1/2 cup grated soap (dissolved in hot water)
Stain Removal	Lemon juice or Stain Remover*
Water Softener	Washing Soda OR Bicarb soda (1/4 cup per full washing tub)
Fabric Whitener	Lemon juice OR vinegar
Disinfectant	Vinegar or mixture of half vinegar/water and few drops eucalyptus oil
Bath/Tiles	Bicarb soda and wet sponge OR vinegar OR Surface Spray*
Mildew/Mould	Vinegar OR Surface Spray* OR 1/2 lemon dipped in bicarb soda
Toilet Cleaner	Basin: Vinegar & bicarb soda Lid: Vinegar OR Surface Spray*
Toilet Deodoriser	Pour in: Vinegar (1/2 cup) OR 6 drops Eucalyptus oil (into basin)

Other:

Carpet Deodorant	Bicarb soda (plain or add few drops lavender or eucalyptus oil)
Carpet Cleaner	Soapy water OR Bicarb soda
Wooden Furniture	Wipe with lemon juice & olive oil (half/half) OR use Surface spray*
Window Cleaner	Spray: half vinegar/water OR crumpled newspaper
Labels (jars)	Eucalyptus oil
Chewing gum	Eucalyptus oil
Walls	Bicarb soda & water OR (for difficult stains) Surface Spray*
Air-freshener	Spray room with: half vinegar/water with added scent (i.e. lavender or eucalyptus oil) OR simmer fresh flowers on stove
Plastics	Bicarb soda paste OR vinegar

Recipes:

***Soap Jelly:** Grate one bar of soap. Put one half in one 10 litre bucket. Put the other half of grated soap in another 10 litre of water. Add ½ cup washing soda and 2 litres of boiling water to each bucket. Stir both buckets until mixture has dissolved. Top each bucket up to full with water. (From Booklet No. 50 – Recycling Soap).

***Surface Spray (All-purpose Spray/Stain Remover):** Mix together 1/3 cup each of water, cloudy ammonia and liquid soap-jelly (see above recipe) OR bio-degradable dishwashing detergent. Mix and store in recycled spray container. (More information: Booklet No. 50 – Recycling Soap)

MORE INFORMATION in the following booklets: Green Cleaning (No. 23): Back-to-Basics Cleaning (No. 24), Amazing Bicarb - (No. 9), Versatile Vinegar (No.33), The Humble Lemon (No.10:), Uses for Eucalyptus Oil (No. 51), Recycling Soap (No. 50), Homemade Polishers & Cleaners (No.5:)
All Booklets can be downloaded from www.theshoppe.com.au © The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe

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