

PDF WORKBOOK
What the *Soul*
Wants for Christmas

OPEN YOURSELF TO FRESH CELEBRATIONS
OF THE HOLIDAYS... AND *Life*



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Putting the Ideas to Work

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 1, My Blisters List

What holiday experiences caused a blister?

Blisters arise when our skin is rubbed harshly, is burned, or encounters something toxic.

Look back to this recent holiday, or further back across many holidays, and make a quick mental list of the moments where ANY soul got blistered. Be as simple or detailed as seems right to you

Put a star by any item in this list that describes a blister you felt this year.

Add some of your own.

The following are examples of irritations that may have occurred:

The presents I slaved over weren't appreciated

Someone stayed too long

We went into debt

I realize now I wasn't appreciative

Someone didn't show up

The work wasn't evenly shared

Someone's feelings were hurt

I wasn't included like I hoped to be

There was a quarrel

In spite of effort, it just felt flat

I am exhausted

I let people down

Take whatever amount of time you are comfortable investing and jot down your thoughts about the items that you starred.

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Week 2, Golden Memories Chart

Personalize the chart by dividing your current age by 4 and label the columns.

A 40-year-old will have columns labeled 1-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40.

Write a quick entry of each of your best Christmas memories under the time category in which it occurred.

Now your chart is ready to share its story. What do you notice?

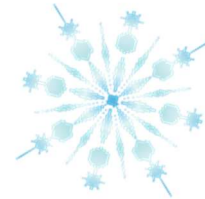
If it serves your purposes, make note of what you notice in your journal. Remember to make a reference to this lesson, *Golden Memories, Week 2*.

1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter
Ages:	Ages:	Ages:	Ages:

What are the patterns of your best memories?

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 3, Blisters & Blessings Inventory



“What I will Pitch and What I will Preserve”

Based on the last two activities (week 1 & 2) fill in the information below.

This can apply to pre- and post- holiday activities, gatherings, food, and anything else that means Christmas to you.

At the age of _____ Christmas held the most joy for me, because _____

This is the purpose of the holiday to me: _____

This past year I enjoyed celebrating with: _____

Best gift I gave this year: _____

Best gift I ever gave: _____

Best gift I received this year: _____

Best gift I ever received: _____

Traditions I want to End (or have Less of)

Rationale:



Traditions I want to Alter

What Aspects:



Traditions I want to Preserve

My Reason:

Traditions I want to Create

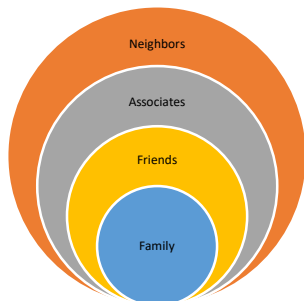
My Inspiration:



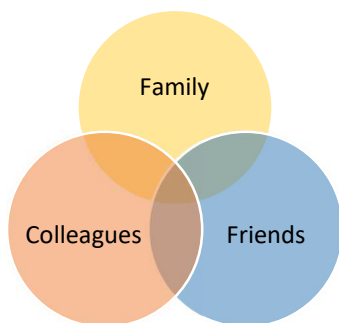
Week 6, Involvement Circles & Notes to Myself, the Architect of Christmas

Involvement Circles

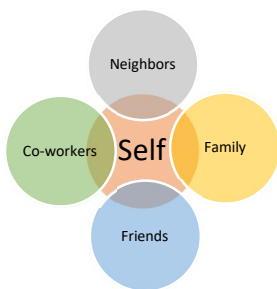
Where are the walls in your life and how do they impact Christmas?



Layered Circles: This model demonstrates degrees of intimacy, and the tiers are based on the relationship type. **Holiday Example:** Christmas Eve with their nuclear family, then on Christmas everyone gathers as the whole family for a lunch and family friends can be invited to drop by in the evening.



Fully Overlapping Circles: This model displays the overlap that occurs when we blend the groups of significant people in our life. This allows them to interact with one another independent of us. **Holiday example:** A Christmas strategy that invites the diverse groups of your family, friends, and associates to the same event.



Segmented Overlapping Circles: This model compartmentalizes the groups of people we interact with regularly. **Holiday example:** Caroling with friends from the neighborhood, holiday lunch for work friends, Christmas Eve with the nuclear family, and Christmas day with the whole family.

These illustrations offer options when designing the new vision of Christmas. Different models may lend themselves to different portions of the holiday. We may invent more.

Identify what feels natural and try to honor that in the new plan, while being open to models that stretch the comfort zone, especially when there is a good reason for doing so, such as including those who otherwise might be alone or eliminating duplicate events for each side of the family.

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Week 6, Notes to Myself, the Architect of Christmas

I am planning a:

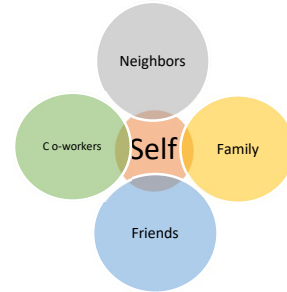
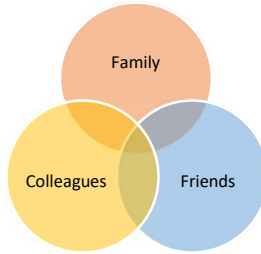
- Complete Remodel Partial Remodel
 New Addition New Design (Starting from Scratch)

The Scale of my Redesign (circle the best one)

Simpler & More Intimate >>> Same as Always >>> Bigger than Ever

Walls/Floor Plan

We all have a way of grouping our social circles. My preferred “involvement circle” is:



This is the quick list of who I include as participants in my Christmas:

Doors & Windows

This is how public or private my ideal Christmas will be. (Check what seems best.)

- “Christmas is for family only”
 “Christmas is for parties”
 “Christmas is an open house”
 “Christmas is an adventure or trip”
 “Christmas is _____”

Room Plan

Room design often suggests function. What “Rooms” will I want include? Shade all that apply; add more.

Attending Parties	Baking with a Group	Baking Solo	Caroling	Christmas Movies
Church Services/Spiritual Observances	Decorating	Family Gatherings	Gift Exchanges	Host a party
Observe the Solstice	Sending Cards	Special Programs	Time for Contemplation	Travel
Volunteering	Wrapping Gifts			

Remember, we pay in physical & emotional energy, and financially, for all we build.

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 9, Peace on Earth & Goodwill to All

Think of at least five people who need to be included somewhere in someone's plan for the holiday. Write their names here:



A large yellow circle is centered on the page. Inside the circle is a large white number '5'. Five horizontal black lines extend from the circle: one from the top left, one from the top right, one from the middle left, one from the middle right, and one from the bottom center.

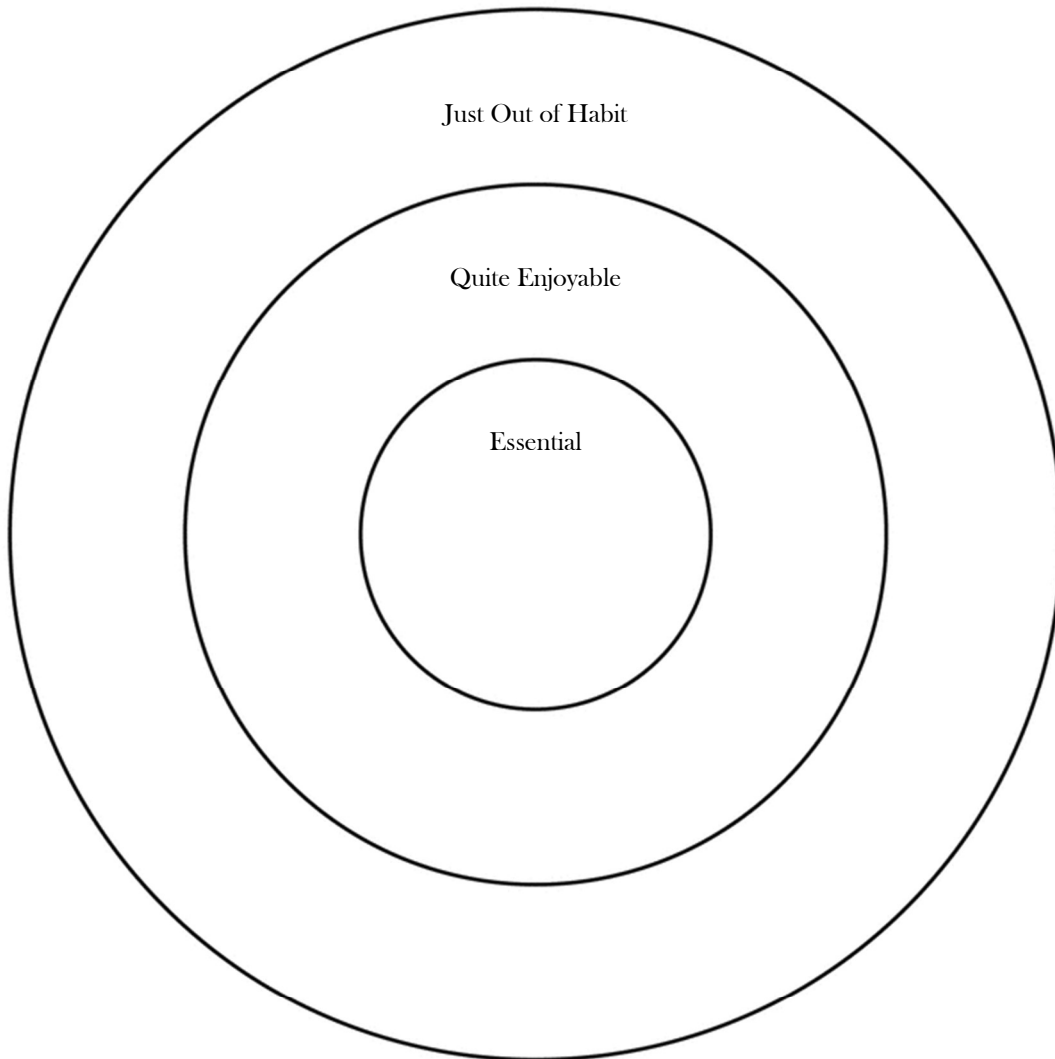
Remember a time, however long ago or trivial it may have been, when you were lonely or felt like you didn't fit in well. What kind of contact did you crave? What dignity did you desire? What would have reached you best in that dark moment?

Reaching out effectively is different than simply reaching out. This week you are only making yourself aware of needs around you. In the back of your mind build awareness in the coming months of how this would be done most kindly and respectfully.

Week 10, Setting up My Holiday Targets

Before we can hit our goals, we must clearly define them.

This week you're setting up what you'll aim to achieve in the coming holiday. Advice: start in pencil. It is likely you will start off inaccurately and become clearer as you see your words placed in categories. Make as many changes as you need until the target reflects your true heart's desires.



Now your **priorities** are becoming clearer. Let this image soak into your **consciousness**.
Now you know where to **aim**.

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Week 10, part 2

Bullseye Interviews with my closest people, 1-5.

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 10, part 3

Bullseye Interviews with my closest people, 6-10.

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

Essential:

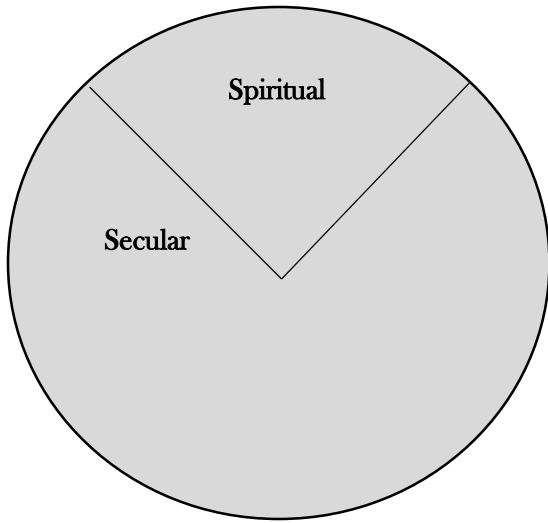
Just out of Habit:

Quite Enjoyable:

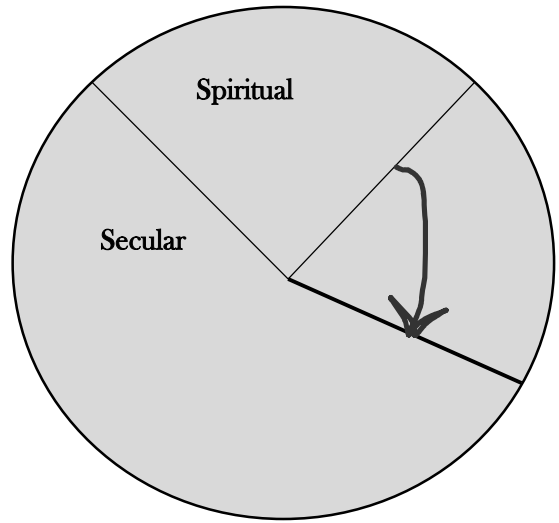
Essential:

Week 11, Dividing the Pie to find my Spiritual to Secular Ratio

ORIGINAL

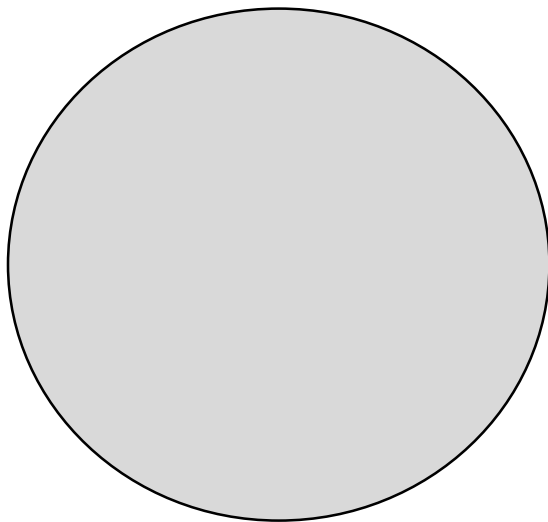


MODIFIED

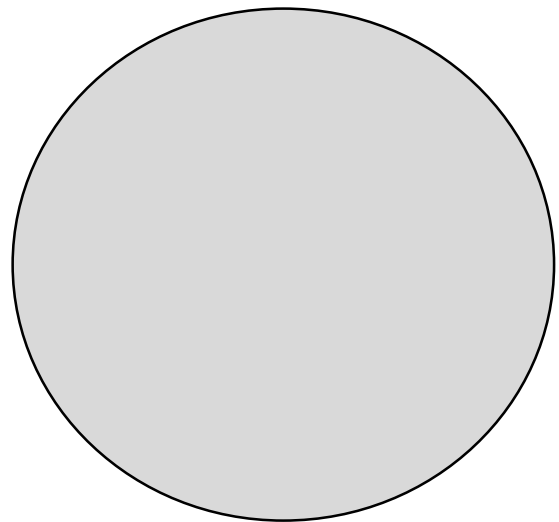


The example above illustrates someone seeking more spiritual expression in future holidays.

How do you divide your pie?



My CURRENT or RECENT Ratio



MODIFICATIONS I Want to Make

Quick notes on what will make this change happen:

Week 13, Holiday Control Panel

It's time to set my dials for the coming holiday. What will I have more of and what will I dial back?

My Holiday Control Panel



Revisit answers from your Week 3 Holiday Blueprint activity, which were recorded shortly after the last Christmas about what would be changed and preserved. Has anything changed since then?

Which activities I am committed to: _____

Which activities I am adapting: _____

Which activities I am scrapping: _____

Who will these decisions impact: _____

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 14, Holiday Food Memories

Use this chart to record some of your best food memories. You can rank them after you've come up with a bunch. Place a star or check mark in the column for this year if you plan to make the memory part of your next holiday.

This Year	Rank	My Favorite Holiday Foods	Who made it	Why I liked it

Notes about recipes I will need:

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 16, Decorations I Adore

Without looking at photos or in the place you store your decorations, using only the mind’s eye, write every decoration you remember and LOVE.

Anything you don’t love touching, sorting, adjusting, or hanging DOES NOT go on this list.

Decoration	Why I love it

Decoration	Why I love it

There are 40 spaces provided to list your treasured items. No judgement if you need space for a few hundred more or only needed 10 lines. Learning to have your authentic relationship with your holidays is part of what will add deeper meaning to your future celebrations.

Do take note though, that things you cannot think of *might* not need to get packed away at the end of the holiday season. Only keep what you value and enjoy!

Week 21, Rethinking My Giving

Draw Names	Themed Giving	Charitable Giving	Adventures

Any revelations?

Week 22, Wielding the Power of Handmade- Think Sheet

5 Clarifying Questions:

1. Why do I want to run toward this opportunity of making gifts or run from it?
2. For whom can I envision myself joyfully making gifts?
3. What kinds of gifts do I already know how to make?
4. What kinds of things would I like to learn so I could make gifts?
5. How much time and money am I willing to devote to handcrafting my gifts?

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 23, Giving Love the Way It's Best Received

Receiving Gifts Acts of Service Quality Time Physical Touch
Words of Affirmation

My Love Language(s) is/are _____

Put these ideas to good use for the special people in your life, especially the ones that are hard to shop for.

Recipient	Possible Love Language	Gift Ideas

Insight or revelations:

Week 24, Embracing Sustainability

Where will I make improvements?

COULD	MUST	WON'T

Examine the items in the Won't column one final time. Am I comfortable with my rationale? Place a star by any Won't column idea that might become negotiable over time.

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 30, Who is Getting What - My Holiday Budget



Do the math! What can you spend without pain?

I can afford to set aside **each week** for the **next 18 weeks**:

(Adjust this amount for the number of weeks it currently is until Christmas.)

My total budget is: \$ _____

This is what I am planning to do to afford this amount:



Who is getting What

Drawing Names/Secret Santa			Experience Gifts or Acts of Service		
Name	Amount	Gift Idea	Name	Amount	Gift Idea
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

“When we give cheerfully and receive gratefully, everyone is blessed.” Maya Angelou

Week 32, Finding Your Yes!

Tune into Your Enthusiasm with these Questions:

1. What activities do you get lost in pleasantly? Tip: If there are things you do that cause you to lose track of time, or forget that work is “work”, you are on the right track.
2. What things do you get paid for that you would still do for free?
3. What do you get to do, or still wish you could do, that seems like a dream come true?
4. What activities make you feel most alive?
5. What do you do that makes you sigh with relief?
6. What are you willing to do as a volunteer?
7. What things do you deeply enjoy doing that most people do not?
8. What were you doing the last time you felt most alive?
9. What is the most important thing you’ve ever done?
10. What is your hidden talent or secret superpower?

Week 34, My Prescription for Loneliness

Rate Your Sense of Loneliness: Circle the spot that aligns with what you feel.



Write the Number you selected here: $\times 5 =$ Practice Days

Circle the Prescriptions that Appeal to You:

- Value My Own Company
- Start Something
- Deliver Someone Else from Loneliness
- Rescue a Pet
- Volunteer, Anywhere, as the Fastest way to Legitimately Belong

Before you put one or more of the prescriptions to work for you with a new group of people, answer these questions and make note of where you are might need improvement:

- Am I thoughtful?
- Do I express my interest in others?
- Do I really listen to hear what is being said?
- Do I respect “No” graciously?
- Does my character and conversation reflect courage, compassion, fairness, and honesty? When these four things are present the chemistry is most appealing. *But remember, none of us will have universal appeal because having it isn't necessary.*

Week 35, My More Meaningful Christmas Checklist

Giving

- My giving list is planned.
- I've set a spending amount & I'm saving in advance instead of paying until April next year.
- I have considered options to traditional gifts.

Socializing

- I know what is most important to me and I've placed those things on my calendar.
- I have considered the importance of including easily overlooked and complicated guests.
- I have rehearsed how to say an honest "yes" and an honest "no".

Wise Effort

- I have a plan for decorating in a way that satisfies me without any overwhelm.
- I plan to balance holiday treats with simple healthy meals.
- I will gently adjust myself if I become impractical or disrespectful of myself or others.

Peacefulness

- Reality happens. Some of what I envision won't take place. I gently release my expectations.
- I am ready to forgive what needs to be forgiven in myself and others throughout this holiday.
- I have a plan in place for feeding my soul this holiday.

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT

Week 38, Nostalgia and the 5 Senses

What Memories are Made of:	See	Hear	Taste	Touch	Smell
“Snow Shovel Brigade”, when the parents and children of a large family piled into their station wagon and went around town to shovel the driveways and sidewalks for relatives and family friends after a substantial snowfall.	X	X		X	
Jelly Day, annual gathering of two families to make several types of jelly that are given as gifts	X		X	X	X
Christmas Caroling Party, singing together walking through the streets, and then having hot cider and cookies afterward.	X	X	X		X

My Memories	See	Hear	Taste	Touch	Smell

Creation of a Unique Experience	See	Hear	Taste	Touch	Smell

Our activities this year may become seeds of love that bloom repeatedly in Decembers to come.

Week 40, Caring For One Another in the Holiday Season

Here’s a sample chart to guide the completion of a chart for you and your dear ones. Your chart is on the next page.



Caring For One Another in the Holiday Season



	Me	Us	Individuals
Reaction to stress	Sniping at loved ones Racing around as a servant	Mid-event arguments, someone likely to storm off	Nephew , who exhibits autism spectrum disorder (ASD), begins to yell and runs away to hide. Cousin (anxiety)- prone to drink too much
Sources of stress	Feeling the need to entertain others Feeling the need to be perfect when hosting	Loose structure too loose, no one knows what to do with themselves	Nephew : too many questions, having to wear shoes Cousin : feeling left out
Proven Soothers	A glass of wine Self-talk: “This is a chance to love; there is no need to impress”	Limited alcohol, distractions	Nephew : getting a few minutes in another room to draw small pictures. Cousin : having a task to do, glass of wine, someone to talk to
Simple Modifications	Make events pot-luck or Find recipes that can be prepared the day ahead	Have a football game on in the garage or den Play a group game	Nephew : Prep family and friends to give nephew his space by asking fewer questions, if any at all. Circulate a list of things he likes to talk about Cousin : have aunt assist you by asking arriving guests what they’d like to drink Ask aunt to look out for your new friend who doesn’t know many people at this event
Complex Modification	Hire a server or kitchen help Shift the event to another friend or family member’s home	Have a bit of team work to do that breaks people into groups (Move some furniture, go through old photos...)	Nephew : Offer a reward to work for. Break the event into three categories (before we eat, while we eat, after we eat) offer the reward for staying calm and with the group. Place a check mark under each portion of the event so progress can be gauged. (Consider having a small treat if only two or one parts of the event are successful.) Cousin : Asking aunt to keep an eye on the nephew and to tell you if anyone seems to start asking too many questions.

HOLIDAY BLUEPRINT



Caring For One Another in the Holiday Season



	Me	Us	Individuals
Reaction to stress			
Sources of stress			
Proven Soothers			
Simple Modifications			
Complex Modification			