

## Joy? Joy!

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Excerpt from Godsend Psychological Services PLLC December 2015 eNewsletter

Greetings!

I love this time of year. Not so much the cold temperatures and holiday shopping. I especially like singing Christmas songs. One of my favorites is the song "Joy to the World." In my professional and personal life, I talk to many who have had their joy stolen or have allowed their joy to be stolen. How about you? Do you have joy today? In this month's eNewsletter I talk about some ways we lose our joy along the way and ways to re-discover our joy!



### **Where Did the Joy Go?**

Research at Harvard University School of Public Health has consistently shown that positive emotions like joy help us manage negative moods and stressors, and help decrease self-destructive habits (such as smoking, drug abuse, overeating) that cause various health problems.

Your joy can be derailed by negative life experiences such as low income, poor housing, poor health, stressful work environments, unfulfilled goals, loss of loved ones, and conflicted family and friend relationships. At the other extreme, abusive relationships rob your joy – relationships with people that are physically, sexually, verbally, emotionally, and/or financially abusive. In addition, your belief system may steal your joy. Believing you are not worthy of joy, health, love, or any good thing leads to --- you guessed it --- not having those blessings. And let's remember that emotional health issues such as depression and anxiety definitely affect your level of joy.

### **Here are my Top 10 Picks to Re-Discover Joy**

1. Plan a time each day to do be in the moment and not focus on problems.

2. Give yourself permission to have time to dance or sing or laugh or play daily.
3. Experiment with the power of prayer and see how it works for you.
4. Choose to end relationships that are abusive.
5. Connect with a faith community as studies show it's good for mood & health.
6. Choose to love and be loved.
7. Give of your time or talent to someone less fortunate than you.
8. Meditate on uplifting scriptures, literature, songs, and memories.
9. Allow yourself to be with others without judging them or yourself.
10. Seek professional help if your life stressors are too much for you to manage.

**HAPPY CHANUKAH! MERRY CHRISTMAS! HAPPY KWANZAA!**

Source:

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/>

Dr Boatswain is a Licensed Psychologist and Certified Group Psychotherapist. She is founder of Godsend Psychological Services PLLC, a premier counseling, consultation, and education company specializing in helping adolescents and adults achieve optimal health by integrating mind, body and spirit theories, and techniques. Dr Boatswain has been a trusted professional for over 20 years, with experience treating psychological conditions in children through older adult populations.

Note: Information provided in this eNewsletter is designed to support, not replace the recommendation of your medical doctor or mental health provider.

See my website [www.godsendpsychologist.com](http://www.godsendpsychologist.com) for other helpful articles and resources and information on a free 15 minute consultation.

Contact me about my monthly RELAXATION WORKSHOPS. Learn how to activate the body's natural relaxation response and reduce everyday stress, improve sleep, manage pain, boost your energy and mood.

Other Workshop Topics Available to Meet Your Personal Needs and the Needs of Your Business, School, or House of Worship