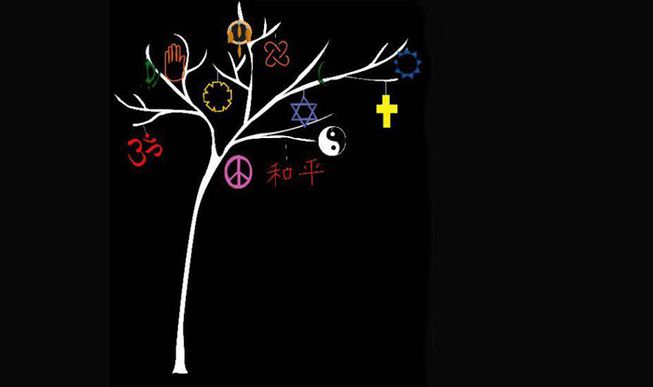
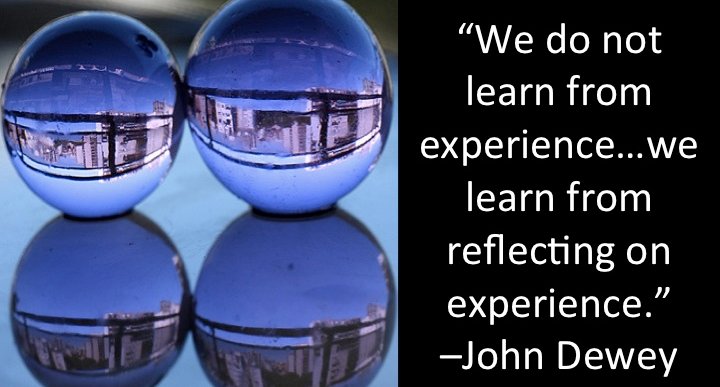
*You need only claim the events of your life to make yourself yours. When you truly possess all you have been and done…you are fierce with reality. – Parker Palmer*

To this day, when I hear the song, *Let There Be Peace on Earth* I get emotional. The words have touched me since my senior year in high school when it was our class song. *Let peace begin with me… take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.* Since those early days I have strived to be present in a peaceful way. For those of you who know me, you know that I have not lived up to that goal. I am more a busy/energy person, than a peaceful person, but I keep practicing by focusing on living in the present moment as much as possible!

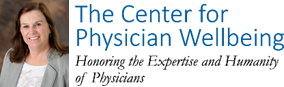
Recently, I was talking to a physician who wanted to “make changes in the way life was rolling out” and I suggested it might be helpful to revisit the past year. After doing just that, we decided to step away from the “list” of what the year had delivered and allow for some grace (self-compassion for not being perfect) to seep in and help give the year *meaning*. When we met for the second time to explore if there had been any insights from the review and reflection time, I was surprised to hear this: *I realize that I need more* ***peace*** *in my life, that I need to take time during my week to just* ***be****, and to* ***reflect*** *on what I am doing, and ask myself what feeds me, and what gives me a* ***sense of purpose.***

During the holiday season I think a lot of us can relate to the need for some peace and quiet. So, I thought I would give you a few stress-reliever tips for getting through the end of this year.

* Eat Mindfully. With so much food around, we start to eat without tasting it. Slow down, sit and SAVOR.
* Walk and Observe. Take in the sights, sounds and smells as you walk through your neighborhood, shopping, or rushing to an appointment. Slow down and NOTICE.
* Take a 3-minute breathing break. Wherever you are when you start to feel like Scrooge, just take a few minutes and BREATHE.
* Give yourself a mini-gift of self-care. Do something you like, a bath, a phone chat, a cuddle, EMBRACE.
* Practice Gratitude. Reflect on the things you are grateful for in your life. APPRECIATE.
* Recall happy moments from times past and celebrate the feeling. RECALL and REJOICE.
* And…
  + Acknowledge any feelings you have – both negative and positive especially if you are grieving
  + Reach out if you need comfort or help from others
  + Be realistic and set boundaries for what you can and can’t do
  + Take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally… LIVE.

Let Peace begin with me: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPH4LRASWbo>

Thank you for all the ways you allow me to be a traveler with you on your journeys.

***Happy Holidays, Kathy***

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