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Joy

'Tis the season we think about, hear about joy.
Often we can find ourselves thinking that experiencing joy
would be wonderful, yet it is often elusive.

LET'S ASK A FEW QUESTIONS...

When you wake up in the morning, what thought gives you joy?

What about your day do you find purposeful?

By your own definition, what brings you delight?

Along with being helpful to ourselves in this season, maybe our pursuit of
understanding joy in our own lives can help us understand it better in our residents lives.
Both its presence and its absence.

Joy can seem elusive. But even if we struggle, we can find a path to joy and
then be able to help others find their own paths.

So how do we find our paths? Live them out? Choose a path of joy daily?

Here are a few suggestions:

Gratitude

Nothing paves the way for joy like gratitude...and there's always something
to be grateful for. Always. We have to shift our thoughts here and be mindful.
Which leads us to...

Find the good

Author Nancy Fox of "Leadership Pathways" (highly recommended read)
tells a wonderful story entitled "Find the Shiny". Here's a brief telling of her
beautiful story.

She tells of a day she went out to a local quarry to enjoy being outdoors and
searching for valuable minerals and shiny pieces on heaps of rocks and
debris. In the quiet of the morning, she heard a loud rumbling and up pulls
school buses full of excited children. They take over the heaps of rocks and
sediment. Quiet is gone, peace is disrupted. As she listened to all the activity
of the children, she heard a child repeatedly asking the teacher "what do I
do?" The teacher replied "look for the shiny, just look for the shiny."

As a leader she received this as a good word. We can as well. We can
heighten our own joy and that of others by looking for and finding the good
which is always present, and choosing to focus there.

We can recognize the good, the shiny as in the story, in moments. True for
our residents, including and especially those living with dementia, and true
for us as well.

Accept what you can do

What you can influence and impact, and what you can't. This includes
embracing our own strengths and weaknesses and those of others.

Choose to breathe...

...deeply in awareness. Take 5 minutes to be still and be aware of and
mindful of your breath and relaxing your muscles throughout your body.

Once in a staff training a cook shared her story of taking 5 minutes during
her shift each day to step out to the courtyard, away from the stove,
into fresh air, and just breathe. She found this simple daily practice to be
lifegiving to her.

Watch for joy

Undoubtedly during the holiday weeks you'll witness at least one
or even several moments of spontaneous, authentic joy in your building. A
resident re-united with a family member, joy expressed by a staff member.

Think of it as an unwrapped gift---watch for it---assume it will show up.
Expect to bear witness to joy. And then don't rush past it. Don't miss the joy
amidst all the urgent.

The happiest of holidays to all!



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lanette Williams brings an array of leadership services to the HRS team.
Her role as Manager of Risk Services combines her gifts of education
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