



## **Wishing you a peace-filled holiday!**

It's the holiday season and regardless of the holiday you celebrate my wish for you is peace. As a culture, we toss that word around a lot this time of year. From cards to wrapping paper, peace is viewed as an automatic feeling we should have when the holidays arrive. It's assumed it's an easy place to find, but as caregivers that's not always true. In fact, this time of year is not always merry.

The holidays can conjure up memories of loss, disconnection, loneliness, sadness, turmoil and disappointment. None of these things are portrayed in the media we see, but that doesn't make them any less a reality.

Everyone has their own expectations for the holidays. Sometimes those expectations are met or exceeded, but other times you're left feeling empty, hurt and disappointed.

Sometimes, as caregivers, we fail to acknowledge just how heavy life can feel, especially at the holidays. We put our heads down and push through "all the stuff" and try not to think about how things really are around us and inside of us. We dare not think about it or linger there too long because the emotions are just too painful.

If this resonates with you, please know my heart is with you. I'm sorry the holidays are not a pleasant time for you. I'm sorry life has not dealt the cards you wish you'd been dealt. This is life's journey and sadly, it's not always a Hallmark moment.

In light of that, I hope you will take the time to look for the good in your life in spite of what is missing for you. I believe that's what the holiday season is meant to teach us. It's not about gifts, and parties, it's about cherishing whatever you have around you in that moment that brings you joy. It may be a challenging task, but I encourage you to look for those things because it's in that realization where we build our resilience. It's in that realization that we find a break from all the heaviness of our journey. That break is a moment of peace in spite of what our life has become.

It's in that spirit that I wish you a holiday that fills your heart with all things joyful and light-filled, whatever that may look like for you. There's no wrong answer. No matter how emotional this season may be for you, my wishes for you are moments of calm and quiet, unexpected surprises, laughter, connection, and instances that feel like magic and lift you up. Peace is a work in progress, but appreciating the small moments is a good start.

**Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you and yours!**  
**Barbara**



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