



Don't Let a Grinch Steal Christmas



While the holidays are a wonderful time to get together and celebrate, there are some people who seem to use this time to become overly critical, spread unhappiness, and complain. They are grinch.

What do we do about those people?

First, we need to recognize that the holidays put us in contact with family and friends that we don't always see often, so it is necessary to realize that different people respond to the same situations in different ways. A fun activity for you, such as going to a movie, may not be fun for someone who doesn't like to sit still. So ASK, don't ASSUME when planning activities.

Second, the people closest to us, either at home or at work, are often those who frustrate us the most because we have unmet or disappointed expectations.

We often expect our loved ones or people we see 8-10 hours a day to read our minds, know what we mean even when we are not clear, and respond the way we would respond. When they don't, we are disappointed. This can set people up for hurt feelings. To preclude those problems, again, don't assume. Make sure that you use more words, not less, and make sure everyone is clear on what is expected, when, and why.

Third, some people just tend to complain. They don't like the food, the decorations, or Aunt Betty's casserole. Regardless of how perfectly things turn out, they will choose to

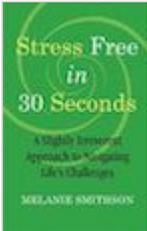
Mary's Updates

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Mary



Press the play button

Mary's Book of the Month



[Stress Free in 30 Seconds](#) by Melanie Smithson

Melanie dropped the price of her book, **Stress Free in 30 Seconds** today and tomorrow to help get us through the holidays.

Make life just a little easier by reading Melanie's book this season to reduce tension, deal with difficult people, and react more positively to challenging people and events.

My favorite chapter is Dealing With Habits, which discusses how to effectively handle the dangers of excessive worrying and procrastination. The exercise at the end of the chapter (there are exercises at the end of every chapter) is to list habits that don't serve us, and then ask "Which of habits am I willing to do something about?" or "Which of

be unhappy. You cannot do much to make unhappy people happy, but you can deflect their comments by asking a question, changing the topic, or refocusing their attention. With toddlers we call it bait and switch - it works on grinchers, too.

Fourth, remember that holiday commitments and lack of time can strain some normally very nice people to the point where they become difficult. They may complain more, criticize more, or try to get others to take sides. Understand that this can be a normal reaction to stress, but don't fall prey to the negativity.

The key to dealing with other people's negativity is to manage our internal reactions first. Both at home and at work, breathe deeply, remain calm, stay focused, be cheerful, and stick to the facts. Ask difficult people questions to shift from the emotional to the rational, such as:

- *What do you need from me?
- *What outcome would you like today?
- *How can I help you right now?

Asking people who are being difficult to see beyond the emotion of the moment pushes the dialogue into problem-solving instead of complaining.

When that one irritating person starts to impact others, another technique is to pull them out of the situation and ask them to regroup, assess the problem, vent, agree on reactions, then rejoin the group.

This does not mean being a doormat to smooth over every little conflict. Let's face it, there are some grinchers out there. People who behave badly need to be addressed and the behavior cannot be allowed to ruin events for others.

Most holiday tensions are the result of lack of time, desire to please others, and expectations that are impossible for even Currier and Ives to meet.

Encourage people to participate in festivities, allow for imperfections, and remember that during celebratory holiday events, it is more important to be together than to have perfection.

Choose to be happy and truly celebrate this holiday season. Decide that if people are cranky, that we will take a page from Frozen and let it go.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Please share your feedback on this article on [my blog](#).

How Can We Help?

We don't assume, so here is a brief list of

these habits needs to be addressed first to change?" Then create a plan to transform that habit and celebrate the success.

Melanie's book is a fun and enlightening read. Even reading it for 5 minutes at a time makes a real difference! Recommended for people who feel overwhelmed, stressed or frustrated, especially during the holidays.

Twitter and Social Media

Is a picture worth 1,000 words? Maybe. Instagram is growing rapidly and it is not just for kids. For example, real estate agents can use Instagram to profile homes, businesses can profile products, and authors can use it to highlight books. Instagram is targeting professionals with a section called Instagram for Business at: <http://business.instagram.com/>

Another option is utilizing [Flipagram](#), which lets you create a short video with music using your photos. Very cool!

Pet Tip

Yes, my dogs get Christmas presents. Bella got two hard rudder toys that she has been unable to chew through (yay!) and Dolly got new stuffed toy ducks.

What my dogs do not get includes sugary treats, anything with alcohol, or extra food. While people sometimes overindulge during the holidays, our pets do not need digestive problems or the few extra pounds.

Show pets they are loved with extra walks, extra play time, or a safe toy.



Thank you for reading this newsletter



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2. Emcee corporate events and fundraisers
3. One-on-one business consulting
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