

Remember the Grinch this Christmas!

“How the Grinch Stole Christmas” is a beloved Christmas tale told through picture books, a tv special and movie adaptations. We love to engage in the magical story of how a scruffy, green, cranky Grinch creates festive havoc and then learns a life changing lesson and embraces interpersonal change. It’s an important lesson, and something that is still very relevant today!

-Don't worry about the decorations. When the grinch took down every decoration in Whoville, the spirit of the season still prospered. There is a lesson there for us. Even if we don't get all (or any!) of our decorations up, we can still have a meaningful and successful Christmas time. So, re-evaluate how much time and effort you need to put into decorating this year, knowing that your holidays don't depend on the decorations.

-Be your authentic self. The grinch was green and grumpy yet he was okay with that part of himself. We should remember that not everyone will be happy, outgoing and cheery the entire holiday season. The common thought is that Christmas is about joy and cheer and that's it. In reality, Christmas can also activate grief, fear, loneliness and other uncomfortable feelings. We have to make space for our multiple and conflicting emotions. Don't be afraid to be like the Grinch and let yourself be how you are in a given moment. Emotions are temporary, they will pass when we stop suppressing them.

-Connecting with others. Find time for connection this holiday season, whether that connection is cuddling your pet, spending time with your favorite people, or even reaching out virtually to those far away. We don't have to host perfect parties or attend every event to have a great holiday. Even though the Grinch only had his best friend Max, in the end, he joined in the celebrations with the people of Whoville.

-Embrace the spirit of surprise. The Grinch expected all of his stealing and spitefulness to ruin Christmas, but he was truly surprised when his scheming failed and Whoville flourished with song and cheer. This is a time of year when we can notice the generosity, kindness of others and allow ourselves to appreciate the joy and amazingness of being human.

-Let your heart grow by three times. This holiday season let your heart lead the way. Initially, the Grinch let anger, resentment and bitterness grow, and then blamed others for his inner distress. Rather than trying to create a life he wanted to live, he tried to make them feel as crummy as he did. By letting go and no longer holding on to negative emotions, the Grinch allowed his heart to grow. This time of year is a natural time for transitions. As the calendar turns over to a new year, we can take the time to turn towards ourselves and reflect on how we want to create a life that aligns with our values.

Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and a very Happy New Year from us here at the Employee Assistance Program.

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