



LIVING
in the

Present

BY SUSAN FISCH GOOD & AUDREY MADIGAN

We're told life is lived in the present. But is it? Do you live in the present? If you're like many of us, we go through our days not fully aware of what's going on around us. Sometimes we have a difficult time being present because we get preoccupied worrying about the future or caught in the past. We tend to let the present go past unnoticed, and miss the precious moment of the here and now with all its beauty, joy, challenges and wonder. *Living in the present is not easy.* It's something we have to do intentionally and it takes time. And during the holiday season when we're pulled in so many directions and at times overwhelmed with all that needs to be done, it can be even more difficult.

God blesses us in small and amazing ways each day; don't miss seeing and experiencing any of them. Here are seven ways we hope will help you be present during the holidays:

- 1. Start each day with prayer. It will set the framework for your day.**
- 2. Name something you're grateful for every day. Keep a gratitude journal to record them. The more you search for gratitude, the more you'll find it.**
- 3. Meditate. Take a few minutes or moments, wherever you can find them in your day, to remain still and try to think of nothing but the present.**
- 4. Breathe. When you're stressed you tend to take shallow breaths. Learn to breathe in 4 beats, hold for 7 and release for 8 when you're tense or anxious. This automatically relaxes you.**
- 5. Get plenty of sleep. Sleeps heals and strengthens; enabling you to have a clearer perspective on all you're dealing with during this holiday time.**
- 6. Find joy and laughter every day. Watch an old episode of "I Love Lucy" or whatever strikes your funny bone.**
- 7. Forgive people who have hurt you. Forgiveness releases you from the past and allows you to focus on what today holds.**

We invite you to try one or more of these practices to be present and trade the stress of the season for the blessings it has for you.