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Jonathan Hunsaker: Welcome, everyone, to a special holiday edition of Empowering You Organically. I'm your host, Jonathan Hunsaker, joined with my co-host, TeriAnn Trevenen.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Hey, everyone!

Jonathan Hunsaker: So today, we want to talk about keeping the holiday stress in check. We actually wrote an article about this on the Organixx website, and so, we're going to kind of use that as our cheat sheet. But we just want to talk a little bit more about it, because quite frankly, the holidays are not the most stress-free time of year.

We all like to pretend that we're happy and joyful, and gifts, and presents, and all of that, but deep down inside, I think a lot of us are really managing our stress levels, really figuring out how to manage our stress levels, manage our family members, manage all the other craziness that comes in with the holiday season.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah, in fact, research proves that most of the world dreads the holiday season. One survey found that close to half of the respondents said they dreaded the festive season. I can't imagine why, when we have Christmas already out in the stores in September.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah. I remember, I was going to look for Halloween stuff, and there was already Christmas stuff in Costco, and it was—

TeriAnn Trevenen: It's unbelievable. I was at Costco in September, and they had Christmas trees.

Jonathan Hunsaker: So—and no wonder, I mean listen, we put so much pressure on ourselves to make these big holiday season, and do all these decorations, and buy all these presents for our kids and for people that we love. Like we've put a lot of this stress on ourselves, a lot of the keeping up with the Joneses. What are you going to put on Instagram? What's going to go on Facebook? You see what everybody else is doing.

And I'd just like to say let's stop. Let's slow down a little bit. It's not that important.

You know that you get all excited for the holidays, you get all excited, and then, right after Christmas, it's like this big let-down, everything's gone away, and now you've got a whole other year for it? It's not that big of a deal. We make it into a big deal, but it's really not a big deal.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Or, you have the other side of it, and some of the most beautiful things in life can also be some of the biggest triggers for people. So, food, family, money, and it's like they can't wait for the holidays to be over. It's like "When are we going to get through this?" And then, all of that stress and anxiety of managing all of those triggers leaves you just feeling down in the dumps and sad after holidays.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Well, and not to mention, it's wintertime, so there's—I'm down in Texas, so we get a lot more sunlight down here, thank goodness, but I grew up, up in Baltimore, and even further north, I mean now is the time that the sun is not coming out as much. So now, we have cloudy days all the time, we're not getting that vitamin D, and so, it starts to affect our moods.

So, listen, it's not your fault. If you're stressed right now, or you're over-stressed, it's not your fault. There's a lot of things that are going against you right now.

So, in this podcast, we're going to talk about the top 12 things that you can do to really manage that stress. And if you start implementing it right now, you can actually breathe easy this holiday season and help release some of the stress and not feel all that pressure.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yep, absolutely. So, with Christmas right around the corner, not very far away, we are going to give you those 12 tips to keeping your stress in check.

Number one, and we talk about this a lot, we've talked about this a lot over the last year, take care of you first. Remember that you are the only person who can assess your needs and what you have to do to be happy first and foremost.

Are you feeling sad right now because of certain things going on in your life, relationships, food, health, finances? Are you overly stressed, and you need some time to yourself?

Whatever that is, practice the art of tuning into your own needs at this time of year and making the holidays about you first and foremost, so that you can show up big for everyone else in your life in the way that you want and need to.

Jonathan Hunsaker: We talk about this a lot, that you cannot really care for others until you care for yourself, and it's interesting, I mean as a dad, I find myself constantly wanting to put my daughters first, and thinking about my daughters first, and what do I need to do for them, when really, the best father I

can be will be to take care of me first, manage my stress levels, give myself a day off, do these little things instead of always thinking about “What do I need to do for them?”

If I do that for me, I will show up better for them on a regular basis.

And so, yeah, I think taking care of you first is often set aside. It's the holiday season, it's the time for giving and time to take care of other people, but you have no space to take care of other people unless you've taken care of yourself first.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely.

Number two, set boundaries with others. One of the best ways you can beat holiday stress is to practice the art of saying no. A lot of us get really overwhelmed, we get a lot of stress and anxiety around saying no to people. This goes back to putting ourselves first.

It starts with practicing using the word no. We don't have to say yes to everything that's requested, everything that's asked of us. And in fact, I think a lot of our stress around it comes from feeling like we have to seek the approval and make sure that everyone else is satisfied with how we behave in our lives, and I think we really need to start looking more inward in that.

- What do I need?
- What do I want?
- What makes me feel happy?
- Does this fit in what is in my timeline and what I need right now?

And if it isn't something that fits within what you need right now, it's okay to say no. Say no because you need to put yourself first.

And sometimes, if you really feel like you need to, you can say “No. Right now, I need to put me first.” But really, above and beyond that, you don't need to give excuses or reasons as to why you're saying no. It's okay to say the word no and have nothing after it.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I think that's the biggest takeaway here, and it's very hard to do. No does not need an explanation. You don't need to give a reason. Simply no is enough.

And I have to tell you, in the 20+ years I've done business, the most successful success tip I can give is to say no a lot more often when it comes to business. It's the same way to be successful in your personal life is to say no.

So, if you're invited to a lot of parties and it's starting to feel stressful, say no. If you've been invited over to a family member's house and you don't get along with all of your family very well, it's okay to say no.

Or, it's okay to show up for just a short period of time, right? Show up, make an appearance, say hi, hug everybody, and "Hey, I'm going to get out of here and go take care of me," right? And practice number one a little bit.

So, I think that it's—I think we just forget and we feel so obligated to other people that we say yes and we get ourselves committed to things that just cause us more stress, when just simply saying no will put a bigger smile on your face.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah, and quite frankly, I think the people in your life who matter the most, and who are supposed to be in your life, are the ones that will say, "I appreciate you being honest with me, and I appreciate you having boundaries so that you can show up in the best way that you can show up, in our relationship and in your life."

No matter whether it's a friend, or someone you're in a relationship with, boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, a coworker, a neighbor, the people who really appreciate and support you realize that you're saying no to protect yourself and put yourself first, and they appreciate that. So, just something to think about there.

Number three, don't overdo the sugar. So, this is a really tough balancing act at this time of year, and it can make things very stressful around food. The impact of sugar on our health, from an emotional, psychological, and physical perspective can be pretty big.

And so, at this time of year, I think you have to find balance. You're going to parties, you're spending time around people, there's good food there. I think that it's mindful eating, which is something we've talked a lot about in the past. Have a treat at that party and don't guilt and shame yourself over having a treat, but don't overindulge to the point where you're going to compound any of those issues you might be facing at this holiday season that are already so stressful.

It's okay to have the treat. Don't restrict yourself. Enjoy. But also, have boundaries and respect yourself enough to say, "If I overindulge here, I'm not going to feel good later."

Jonathan Hunsaker: Absolutely. And don't let Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas dinner turn into holiday month of sugar and dinner, right? And that happens often, right?

We start, we just got done with Thanksgiving, right? And we're eating good, and we have all the pie. And it's like "Well, it's the holiday season, we've got sugar cookies, and we have this, that. I'm just going to eat a little bit."

TeriAnn Trevenen: Cake for breakfast.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, before you know it, it's Christmas, and you've had five weeks now of indulging in sugar, and it's very easy, and listen, I'm addicted to sugar. I love sugar, I love the sweets. And what happens is you go down that downward spiral. You eat a little bit of sugar, thinking that it's going to make you feel good, and it actually adds to the depression, it adds to the not feeling good.

So, if you're feeling stressed right now, if you've been indulging since Thanksgiving, stop. Give yourself a week off, a week and a half Christmas hits. Let yourself detox a little bit. And then on Christmas, enjoy some candy, enjoy some desserts and chocolate and things like that. That's okay. But don't let Thanksgiving to Christmas turn into a holiday month of depression and sugar and overeating and overindulging.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah, and I think planning and verbalizing is so important. I think it's okay to say to yourself, "I commit to eating these meals on these days, and after that, I commit to myself again. I'm done. I'm going to go enjoy this with my family, and then tomorrow, I'm going to commit to my nutrition plan that I want to stick to."

Sometimes, saying those things out loud, writing it on a mirror, writing it on a sticky note, giving yourself permission to enjoy and then committing yourself to what you want to stick to after you've had that holiday meal. So, just some things to think about there.

Jonathan Hunsaker: And before you go to number four, one last tip that I know you gave last year, that I thought was huge, was when you're deciding the desserts and the sugar to indulge, pick the stuff that you don't get very often.

Don't eat that Snickers just because you figured, "Hey, today's a day that I'm going to eat sugar." Eat the pecan pie, or the pumpkin pie, or the things that only come around every once in a while. Like really enjoy that dessert or that sugar that you're going to have, and don't have yourself snacking on the candy bars, the Hershey's, the crap that's there 24/7, right?

If you're going to indulge, enjoy that stuff that just doesn't come around as often, and truly enjoy it.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah, I actually do live by that. When I go out to eat, when I have the holidays, I look at things from that perspective. "What's on this menu that I can't get any other time of year, any other place, that I could make at home?"

And I make my decisions based off of that, and it makes it a much more enjoyable experience for me, because I limit to that unique treat or that unique food, and then I eat it with other healthy things on my plate, and I love it, and it's like a treat. It's like "Wow, this is really fun because I don't get this any other time."

Number four, get creative with gift-giving. In cultures that consider Black Friday another holiday, which is so true, and it gets earlier and earlier, the holiday that can be changed as far as date and time goes, it's hard to resist the urge to spend, spend, spend during the holiday season.

This is especially true when it comes to our kids and our family members and our significant other. We think we have to outdo the year before and we have to wow them more than we ever have before. I think it's okay to change the way you give gifts.

I've heard of people doing things like "We're not going to do gifts this year. We're going to give Christmas to someone else, and then we're just going to enjoy that day as a family."

I know there's people who have things where they give—their kids get one thing from Santa, one thing from them, and one thing from a sibling gift exchange. They get three things, and that's it. Just those three things.

I know some people who say they get one thing from Santa, one toy from Mom and Dad, a pair of—an outfit, and a book to read, and they really limit to that.

I think that we can be creative and intentional with our gift-giving, and I don't think it always has to be this big wow factor of like "I spent this much money and they got the best toy," because the reality is, they play with their one favorite gift, and everything else falls to the side, and then your house is full of stuff that you're never going to use, and Christmas is over.

I think smaller can be so much better, and we need to practice that more as a society.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, we just don't need so much stuff. We don't need to much junk. And I'm reminded often, my two-year-old is about to be three next week, and she has more fun with the box generally than with the toy that's inside of it. As long as it's a big box, right?

TeriAnn Trevenen: It's so true with kids.

Jonathan Hunsaker: So, it'd be better just to wrap her a bunch of big, empty boxes and put some markers inside of it, and say "Hey, I got you a pretend car. Now, turn it into a car." That's actually a good idea. She would actually have more fun with that than a toy that we would buy.

And listen, it's tough for us. We didn't grow up with a whole lot of money, and while my parents always showed up with a good Christmas for us, I can find myself being in a financial place now where I want to do more, I want to buy some more presents and give my girls this big Christmas, but I really don't, right?

Like part of me does, because for whatever reason, but the other part of me needs to remember that it's not—it doesn't mean anything. It's just presents. It's just some extra junk, and come January or February, I'm going to be itching to go through everything and give half of it away, because it's just clutter and it's just toys and things like that.

So, I think that there's a balance there. And then, keep in mind this whole Facebook/Instagram era, where trust me, you're going to see pictures of other people's Christmases, and these big "Look at the 80 presents we put under the tree," and all of this.

And then, we start having feelings of adequacy, "Am I adequate enough as a parent? Did I give enough?" We've got to choose to opt out of that BS. I'd much prefer to use the other word, because that's what it really turns into, is just a bunch of crap.

And so yeah, I could keep rambling about this on and on, because I feel very passionate about it, but I just think that we need to do less.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely. And one other tip, too, is experiences. One of the goals I've set for myself with myself and my two girls this year is to travel and experience more. And my kids don't remember what I gave them for their birthdays, but they remember that trip we took to New York this summer, and we talk about it all the time. "So, remember what we saw? Remember what we did?"

And so, consider experiences. Go on a vacation for the holidays or buy your kids experiences. Maybe you go to their favorite concert, maybe you go to their favorite adventure park. For people in your life, think of something that's meaningful for them, a place they went on their first date, a concert that they went to when they were younger. Get them a gift of experience, because experiences last with us forever. Toys and gifts, most of them do not. And I hardly remember gifts that I got for holidays. I remember being with people and experiences.

Number five goes hand-in-hand with what we just talked about. Have some fun. Holidays don't always have to be stressful. Instead of going to the store to buy all the presents, go out and go sledding, make a snowman if you have snow around you, go to a Christmas event. Go out and do something fun. Get out of the house, get away from the stress of the holidays, and make memories together.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I couldn't agree more. I enjoy being a big kid, and so, I think that we don't play enough as adults, and I think that we need to play more as adults and just let loose, let go, go be stupid, go be goofy, go have fun, do the little quirky things, and be a kid again.

We get caught up so much, again, in "What do we look like?" and "Are we doing this?" and "Are we doing that?"

And we're really just all big kids. Let's let ourselves be what we really want to be. Go play on the swing set, go climb the jungle gym. Go do all of those things that would just be fun to let loose on again.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely. Number six, right along with what Jonathan just said, keep moving. Exercise is good for your overall health in countless ways.

One article couldn't begin to sum it up. In addition to lowering stress responses, consider this new research suggests that regular exercise helps to convert white fat cells, a risk factor for cancer, to healthier brown fat cells.

A 2012 report published in the Journal of Nature suggest that heat-generating brown fat can help you burn energy instead of storing it.

Other investigations point to regular exercise as a way to prevent leptin resistance. Leptin is a powerful hormone within fat cells that regulates appetite, which is huge at the holidays. This holiday season, get creative with how you can put exercise into an already-tight schedule.

We also know how important exercise and moving your body is for having healthy emotions, happier emotions, a clear mind. And so, at the holiday seasons, it's typically colder for most people, not for everyone, but for a lot of people, it's colder, it's easier to stay inside, it's easier to stop moving, but really, we need to be moving more, getting out, enjoying our time, moving our bodies, and really getting some good exercise in.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Absolutely. It doesn't mean you have to get up and go run in the morning, or go for a bike ride, or even go to the gym. It just means get some more steps in throughout the day.

Almost everybody these days has a step counter, whether it's built into your phone, or you're wearing it on your wrist. Get 10,000 steps a day. Take that extra time to walk up the stairs at the mall if you're going shopping rather than taking the elevator or the escalator. Do the little things to get some more steps in. It'll matter.

Another key thing is, let's say you have to go to a family's house for a holiday event, or a party, and it's starting to feel a little bit overwhelming. Step outside and go for a walk. Just go walk for a little bit. One, you're getting away from the situation, right? And it allows you some time to breathe. But two, the exercise will let your mind go and you can work through whatever emotions are coming up around these people that are triggering you, that you only see once a year anyway, all the different stuff that comes up during the holidays. Go get a little walk in, and it—

TeriAnn Trevenen: That's a great time to get your walk in.

Jonathan Hunsaker: It's great, it really is.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Leave the family party and get your walk in. Seriously, I mean sometimes you just need to walk away.

Jonathan Hunsaker: You know? And I hate to bring up a bad habit that I had for so long, which was smoking, but the one way that smoking really helped with the stress was removing yourself from situations.

So, you'd be in a stressful situation, you go step outside and smoke. Well really, you can get twice as much benefit by stepping outside and taking big, deep breaths of air, not filled with smoke, but just regular oxygen, and that deep breathing and removing yourself from the situation can really limit your stress levels and can really have it be a much more enjoyable experience.

I say add some walking into it with some deep breathing and you're going to feel a world of difference.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely. Number seven, don't ruminate, but do reflect on your life, and I think there's a big difference there, because we can fixate on all the things we don't have, all the things we didn't do, all the things that are stressing us out, all the things that are hard.

It's a great time to reflect on your life. What are you grateful for? What did you do this year that you loved? What are some things that you want to change? But turn it into positive. "I can take this, and I've learned this, and I can turn it into this."

It's a great time to reflect and use that reflection to remember all the positives that you have going on in your life.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, and this is a time to not get sucked into—we can go into a depressed state, right? We can look back at the year and think about "Oh, this happened, and that happened, and this, and

now it's cloudy out, and the holidays," and you can go down a path to where it's not helpful, where it's not beneficial, where it adds more stress.

And so, I encourage you to take, when you're going and you're looking within, look at the lessons that you learned from the past year.

What are some of the things that may have happened that were really good, and what were some of the stuff that were bad, but what are the lessons that you can take away from it? And then, how you can apply it into the new year.

I think that it's—I think the reflection can be very positive. Especially this time of year, a lot of people like to start new things when it comes to New Year's. Use that as your building block to what you're going to do for the next year. How are you going to let those lessons, or how are you going to implement those lessons learned into your next year to make next year a better year than this past year?

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely. Number eight, go on holiday from the media. We did a podcast earlier this year on the impact of social media, our phones, and beyond, and how much they are taking over our lives. In fact, they're becoming an addiction.

I think that this is so true when it comes to the holidays as well, because there's new movies out, there's new shows on TV that just paint this elaborate picture of how we can have this picture-perfect life. We're running ads on social media, "Buy this, buy this, buy that, go to this. You should be doing this; you should be doing that. Get ready for the new year. You need to be doing these goals right now. Go to the gym."

Just like they're bombarding you with stuff to buy for the holidays, or bombarding you with how your life should look, they're bombarding you with what your new year should look like. Sometimes, we just need to walk away and be with people and enjoy the things around us.

There are so many things that I could go on and on and on about this with, but I would say set some meaningful time to put your phone down, put the iPads down, turn the computers off this holiday season and walk away. Disconnect from social media and just enjoy being present, and I think you're going to see a world of difference.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I agree 110 percent. It is we've got to step away a little bit. One of the things I like to turn on the least is the news, right? The news, its job is to get viewership, its job is to—so they can sell advertising. So, it's constantly being sensationalized. It's going to be a lot of doom and gloom. It's going to be this; it's going to be that. Like I like to not know what's going on all the time in the news, right? And everything gets blown out of proportion.

That's one place to start to just be happier, in my opinion, is minimize how much news you're watching.

And then two, I mean what's the other media stuff that is not beneficial for you, right? And a lot of times, really limiting that Instagram time, that Facebook time, the time just—where we're just comparing ourselves to other lives just adds more stress.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely. Number nine, I love this one, cook up some goodness for yourself and others. If baking cookies or whipping up a holiday dinner is your job, do something different this year. How can you kick it up a notch so that it's fresh, wholesome, you're using healthy recipes? I mean make it fun.

And also, make it a healthy potluck if you want to. Have people bring healthy treats. See who can bring the healthiest treat that tastes the best. How fun would that be?

I mean there's so many options out there. I think that not every party needs to be surrounded by everything made with sugar. I think that you can get together with some like-minded friends and celebrate a holiday party, and ask everyone, like I just said, see who can bring the healthiest entrée. See who can bring the healthiest treat, the healthiest appetizer, that tastes the best. Make it fun, make it something where you can be around good friends, good company, and that your body can be nourished by good food.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, and it doesn't all need to be cooked in a ton of fat or doesn't all need to be cooked with a bunch of sugar and all of this other crap that "makes it taste good." There's so many healthy alternatives now that weren't around 10 years ago, 20 years ago. You can make so many meals so much healthier.

And I love the idea of making a game out of it. Plus, what's better than having an excuse to eat a second piece of cake or pie if it's got a little fruit on it, right? It's got to be healthy for you if it's got some strawberries on it, or something like that.

TeriAnn Trevenen: I love it, I love it. Yeah, and in fact, I'm just going to put a little plug right now, if you go to Organixx.com, we have a healthy recipe page on our website. I have made plenty of recipes on our Facebook live videos over the last few months.

In fact, a while ago, I made this yummy peppermint fudge energy bite recipe that was so good, and you could easily take to a holiday party. If you have a holiday party in the morning, we have amazing recipes for waffles and pancakes that are all healthy. So, you can go check that out.

There's just a lot of options out there for healthy alternatives to really indulgent treats.

Number 10, check your vitamin D levels. Being in the sun is the best way to get your vitamin D. Moderate sun exposure can also provide you with a plethora of other health benefits, such as increased nitric oxide production to protect your cardiovascular system.

Vitamin D deficiency is very common if you live in a northern climate or spend a lot of time indoors, and especially at the holiday season, where a lot of people are in colder weather, or we're just a lot slower in our movement, we're indoors a lot more, we're eating a lot more food, we're spending time at parties.

Holidays, a lot of people don't talk about this, but holidays are actually very stressful at work, because you're closing out your work year, so you're spending a lot more time indoors working.

Take some time, going hand in hand with moving your body more, getting exercise, even when it's cold, you can bundle up, you can go outside and get a few hundred steps in. Get that sun, get that exercise, and walk away from stressful situations, clear your head, and really get all of those benefits in one place.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I mean it really is a thing. I mean people get more depressed in the wintertime, and you're not getting that vitamin D.

An excellent place to get your vitamin D is [Turmeric 3D](#), that Organixx makes, shameless plug.

But really, you can get vitamin D in all sorts of other ways. They have spray for vitamin D. Just taking regular vitamin D supplements, capsules, whatever.

There's ways to increase your vitamin D, and it does matter. It does affect your mood. It is smart for you to be proactive on something like that.

Because sometimes, when you're feeling depressed, you don't know why. "Why am I feeling depressed?" All you know is you're just feeling depressed. Well, start taking some actions to help combat that, especially if you naturally get depressed in the wintertime around holidays, and start with vitamin D.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely. Number 11, I love this one, give yourself a gift. What if you put yourself on your holiday shopping list? Would you give yourself the gift of an afternoon snuggled up with a good book, a new outfit, a day hiking in the woods, a relaxing essential oils bath, a day at the spa?

Whatever it may be for you, include yourself, you've made it through this year, you've accomplished big things, you're still here, you're still breathing. There's so much to be grateful for. I think we forget to celebrate ourselves and give to ourselves.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I agree. I mean there's this whole stigma around "Don't be selfish. Don't be selfish." And "Stop being selfish." No, be a little selfish, because the more—

I hate to put it this way, but if you're a little more selfish in taking care of you, you'll actually give more. You'll have more to give to others, you'll have more to give at the local homeless shelter, you'll have just more of you to give, because you feel taken care of, you feel more whole.

And so, I love telling people to be selfish. And be selfish, there's nothing wrong with it. It's not a dirty word. It's not a bad thing. Because the more selfish you are, I actually think it allows you the space and the ability to give to more people.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely. Number 12, remember—this is like the 12 days of Christmas. I love it so much.

Jonathan Hunsaker: It is.

TeriAnn Trevenen: The 12 ways to have a better holiday season and reduce your stress.

12, remember the true reason for the season. Practicing gratitude during this time of year is a great way to switch your mood from down in the dumps to a lighter spirit.

Believe it or not, practicing gratitude is a great way to detox and heal your body. We've talked about gratitude a lot this year, and there's so much research behind it, and there are so many studies done behind it.

There's a study that's shown that participating or practicing in gratitude can not only increase happiness levels by 25 percent, it can also help you sleep better, help you recover faster after surgery, and lower stress hormones by 23 percent.

So, think about how much stress we have. We're talking about how to lower our stress at the holiday season and enjoy it more. Practicing gratitude can put you in the right mood to walk into that holiday party if you're dreading it. What are you grateful for there?

One thing that I've been practicing, and this is just in the last little while, I heard someone talking about how there's so much love all around us, but we don't often see it. Notice places where there's love in your life.

That doesn't always mean people or intimacy or that relationship with a boyfriend or a girlfriend or a spouse, they talked about noticing love in the gift that that person gave you, love in that food that's sitting on the counter that someone grew and you're able to eat, love in the beautiful sun that's outside that's shining down you.

Whatever your religious or spiritual beliefs are, if you don't have religious or spiritual beliefs, you have that connection to nature. There is love there.

I think the more I go down this path of practicing gratitude, it's really just recognizing how much we're surrounded by love in all these daily little things. Sometimes it comes from people, sometimes it comes from nature, sometimes it comes from experiences, and I think the more we recognize the love that's around us, and the things that we're given, and that's not always materialistic things, the more we have to be grateful for.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, I think it's wonderful advice, and I think that it—using gratitude to get you through the holiday season, right? We've all been at places in our lives where money wasn't in abundance, or money was a really big struggle, and the holidays make it really tough.

Well, use gratitude to be grateful for all of those things that you do have so that you don't overextend yourself on your credit cards, so you don't overextend yourself and try to make up for it by buying all of these additional things that you think is going to make you feel better, but it's just going to leave you even more depressed when the January bill comes in the mail and you have to pay off all these credit cards.

So, using gratitude to get you through those areas, using gratitude for your kids and really showing them to be appreciative for all of these toys that you already have, and "Here's all these things that you have," so that when Christmas morning comes around and you've only got them two or three empty boxes with pencils inside of it, they can be more grateful for all the stuff that they already have, right?

And it just—I think it just really can change the entire relationship with the holiday season when we get really present to all the things that we do have rather than all of the marketing that's telling us of all these things that we need to be happy, right?

And everybody buys off of the emotion, how it's going to make you feel, "This new iPhone 23 is going to make me feel whatever." Or this new whatever, new computer, this new car, this new whatever. All these ways it's going to make us feel better, and that's what marketing does. I know. I'm a marketer, right?

And so, the more you get present to the things that you have and you're grateful for the things that you have, the less influenced you are by these other things that tell you, you need this or you need that.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Absolutely. You know? And the last thing I'll close with on this, remember the true reason for the season. Some of my happiest Christmases have been when I have had the least. I can remember some Christmases where I was very poor and hardly had anything, and I remember some of the experiences I had, people who gave to me, making handmade gifts for people. I think back on those Christmases, and I can remember connections and experiences and memories from those Christmases more easily and more readily than I can with the Christmases where I've had extreme abundance.

And so, whatever situation you find yourself in at this holiday season, I challenge you to find that love and that gratitude.

At the time, I remember thinking "I have nothing. I have so little. It's so hard." There were some major stressors in my life at certain points with poverty and not having a lot, and I look back now and I realize how much more I truly had then than I could have ever realized.

So, wherever you find yourself at this time of year, if you're in abundance, remember how much you have and how much you can give, and for those who feel like you just don't have a lot and it's so hard at this time of year, look for the love, because truly, those are some of my most memorable Christmases, when I had the very least but I truly was so blessed.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Love all of the advice here. And I'm going to close off with if you're still feeling stressed after doing all of these 12 things, go do something for somebody else. I promise you, it will lift that depression in a way that sometimes nothing else will.

And even if it doesn't lift that depression, you'll put a smile on somebody else's face, which is naturally going to make you feel just a little bit better about yourself and about your day.

So, if all else fails, go do something for somebody else.

With that said, thank you so much for tuning in. I'm so grateful for all of our listeners that tune into our podcasts week after week, and I hope that you're learning a lot from these podcasts. I learn a lot every time we do them, so I'm very grateful that you tune in and that you listen to us and you allow us to have this little bit of time in your life.

TeriAnn, is there any last words you want to say?

TeriAnn Trevenen: I hope that everyone has a very merry Christmas and finds all the reasons that they have to be grateful this time of year.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Absolutely. As always, I will shamelessly plug our podcast. Go to EmpoweringYouOrganically.com and you can get all of the show notes, the transcripts, you can watch the video.

By the way, if you watch the video, I apologize for the background. I have some construction going on here in my office, and so, that's why you see some plastic around.

But watch the video there and any—we'll have links to these top 12 things, I mean anything else that we've referenced, you'll find the links there.

And as always, find us on iTunes, subscribe, give us a thumbs up, give us a five-star rating, all of that stuff will be greatly appreciated.

I hope that you have the most amazing holiday season. I hope that we've influenced it just a little bit to be a little bit happier. And we will see you on the next show.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Thanks, everyone.

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