

Global Sufficiency Network 2009 HOLIDAY SPECIAL REPORT:

“Celebrating the Holidays in Sufficiency”

Here at the Global Sufficiency Network, www.globalsufficiency.org we are wishing you the very happiest of holidays. We are not talking about the hustling and bustling, excess extravaganza holidays that leave you financially and emotionally depleted and 5-10 pounds heavier.

We are wishing you truly authentic holidays that are aligned with your values and leave you fulfilled and rejuvenated. We wish you holidays that leave you and your loved ones present to love, compassion and gratitude. We wish you holidays that help you diminish your experience of scarcity and uncover the truth about sufficiency.

Scarcity is an unexamined, unconscious mind-set that has you experience a chronic sense of inadequacy. This relentless mantra of not-enough hounds you throughout your day. Your first thought when you awaken is “I didn’t get enough sleep” and your second thought is “I don’t have enough food for breakfast”. Then you go through your day thinking things like: “There is not enough time”, I don’t have enough money, “There’s not enough support”, and I don’t get enough respect”. Throughout the day you have conversations with others and have meetings about what there is not enough of – like not enough funding for non-profits or market share for companies.

And then, your last thought of the day is “I didn’t get enough done.” This siren song of scarcity leads to a very dissatisfying experience of life and can have you feel like you are not enough as a human being.

Here at the Global Sufficiency Network www.globalsufficiency.org , we know it can be different.

We are an international community of people and organizations who are dedicated to helping people uncover the true state of sufficiency in their lives.

We see sufficiency as a mindset of enough – a state of relating to the world knowing that there is enough. From this perspective, the new mantra in your head becomes “I have enough”, “I do enough” and most importantly “I am enough”.

When we live in the context of sufficiency, we find a natural freedom and integrity. We engage in life from a sense of our own wholeness rather than a desperate longing to be complete. We experience gratitude, prosperity, fulfillment and generosity.

For more on sufficiency and Global Sufficiency Network please visit our website www.globalsufficiency.org.

We do hope you enjoy this Special Report and that you share it with others.

Global Sufficiency Network Staff, Volunteers, Advisors and Directors

A Message from the Executive Director,

Several years ago, I transformed my holidays from scarcity to sufficiency and I absolutely LOVE it! I've been able to put the "happy" back in my holidays and actually look forward to this time of year again for the first time since I was a child.

Prior to this holiday transformation, it had been a very dissatisfying time of year for me. I had developed a bad case of the "Bah Humbugs" and I was not fun to be around. A feeling of malaise and impending disappointment would hit me at Halloween and stretch through New Year's Day.

For most of my life the holidays were filled with too much shopping, too much food and drink, too many parties, too many material things that I didn't enjoy, too much travel, too much hemming and hawing over what to get people who don't need a darn thing and too many expectations over what to wear, what to get, what to give, where to go. It was a smorgasbord of excess that left me empty.

Then I set myself FREE!!! I made my fantasies about what I really wanted from the holiday's come to life. It took some awkward moments, some truly tough conversations, some flexibility and some perseverance but I can now say I love the holidays.

I love my holidays now because they are in alignment with my values and they feed my wellbeing. I end up on January 2nd renewed and fulfilled instead of depleted and dissatisfied.

For me the holidays are about focusing on what really matters – people and pets, health and wellbeing, meaningful conversation and contribution to each other and the world.

I don't do gift exchanges of material things.

I don't overeat and drink.

I don't attend every party.

I don't travel excessively.

I focus my energies instead on showing love to myself and others.

I focus on using my time to do things that are rejuvenating to me and my loved ones – like hikes and massages and caring conversations.

I give back through charitable donations and volunteering.

I'm not saying that you have to take on any of these practices in order to be in Sufficiency around the Holidays. You may love many things about the typical holiday experience and that is great. I'm just sharing what I've done that has contributed to transforming my Holidays into what I wanted them to be.

Many people don't get a lot of enjoyment out of the Holidays. If you are one of them,

then I invite you to identify what parts of the Holidays that do not fulfill you and replace those parts with new traditions or new practices that make you “Happy” and even “Sufficient”.

Create holidays that fit with your values that honor what is important to you, that refill instead of deplete and that contribute to the world you want to create.

Use the worksheet at the end of this report to go to work on creating your own holidays from sufficiency.

And ENJOY the transformation.

Marilyn Levin, Executive Director, Global Sufficiency Network,
www.globalsufficiency.org

Here are some of our thoughts about how to celebrate the holidays in sufficiency.

Lynne Twist, Special Advisor, www.soulofmoney.org www.pachamama.org

The opportunity presented by the global financial crisis is to take a recess from excess, and really find out what it's like to not live in excess, not live in way, way, way, way, way, more than we need.

We need to really take a recess from that--particularly during the holidays or during that time when we're kind of being pummeled by more stuff. What people want from each other is time, not things.

For my grandchildren, I give them a card that says, "I promise to take you camping for a weekend at Yosemite. You pick the time, you pick the day, and we'll go off on a weekend." That's way more valuable to my grandchildren than another Barbie doll, or another Barney, or superhero--whatever the current toy is.

So, we have the opportunity to take a recess from excess. And when you do that, you start to see that what people want from each other is time together--which is free. What they want from each other is an opportunity to express their love for each other in an intimate setting.

I'm giving my neighbor a card for Christmas that says, "I will give you three hours, to help you clean out your garage," because every time I see her she talks about cleaning out her garage. And I know when she cleans out her garage, she will be so much happier to be rid of all the stuff that's in there.

Another thing I recommend to people, especially for their children, is to give them money and tell them to give it away. So, for example, I give my grandchildren each \$500 at Thanksgiving (my granddaughter's ten-years-old and my twin grandsons are

eight), and tell them to give the money away to at least three organizations that they believe in by Christmas and to volunteer for at least one of them, and to not tell us until Christmas Eve what they've done. And it is a fabulous, fabulous exercise for them.

They research the organizations they want to give money to, they go and volunteer, and then on Christmas Eve, they tell their grandparents how they used the money. And it's an exercise that allows them see how powerful \$500 can be in their life. And then we talk about what it could have bought--you know, how many Barbie dolls, how many trucks, how many tricycles, so they understand the power of philanthropy.

The word "philanthropy" actually means "love of humankind." And there's no one who loves humankind more than children. So, give them the opportunity to exercise that "muscle." Give them \$50, \$10, \$100--whatever it is, whatever their age--and challenge them to become a philanthropist at an early age.

I also recommend that we reclaim the label of citizen, instead of being thought of as a consumer. To be a citizen with your money, rather than a consumer with your money, is to pay attention to where things come from when you're buying something. You can ask the people who are selling the products, "Where was this made?" "How was it made?" "Who made it?" to avoid products that came from child labor; to avoid products that are damaging to the Earth; to avoid over packaging; and to--whenever possible--buy things locally that are made by people who put love into the product, rather than some sort of chemical toxins into the product to make it last longer or to make it cheaper.

You also want to see if you really need what you are considering buying. There's a wonderful quote from Aristotle. He said, "I love going to the market to see everything that I don't need." And I always have that quote in the back of my mind when I walk through a shopping center, because it makes me realize what I don't need.

Also, it is important to recognize that, at this time, there are companies, there are people, there are businesses that it's important to support, that it's important to look out for, like local farmers that are growing food locally and the local entrepreneurs who are putting together something that's really healthy and useful for the planet.

So, it's really a powerful time to reallocate our financial resources, to take revenues, and spending, and money away from that which is destructive, and reallocate it to that which is productive and sustainable. And you can do that with every spending decision you make.

Isabelle St-Jean, Vancouver Community Group Contact,
www.inspiredmomentum.com

One practical suggestion I have as a way of enriching holiday time is that when everyone is assembled around dinner for example, taking turn during the meal to express a sense of sufficiency in the qualities or actions of another family member.

This would of course place the emphasis on being and doing enough which would counteract a common feeling in families where at least one person is bound to feel they are “not enough” in some ways. This practice would also generate an atmosphere of gratitude, kindness and generosity.

Shea Adelson, Editorial Coordinator, www.sevenstonesleadership.com

One thing you could do from Thanksgiving to the New Year is to keep a Gratitude Journal and write down 3-5 things each day that you are appreciating in your life and in the world, being as specific as you can. On the first day of the year, read over all your entries and then, from the place of all that you have, are and do already create your intention for 2010.

Lora Lyons, Member and Editorial Contributor, www.lyonsleadershipcoaching.com

For Christmas, you can give the gift of spending time with the person receiving your gift. What I've done that worked really well is offered to take out my family (my parents, sister and her husband) to dinner, then a play in Boston. Another year I bought tickets for us all to go to New York City to dinner then to see the Rockettes. These gifts went over very well and made for a very memorable experience in which we all treasure.

You can also give handmade gifts. Personally, homemade gifts are my most favorite kind to receive. It shows that the person took great care by taking the time to make me something special.

Use a skill or hobby that you enjoy and are good at. This can result in a crocheted scarf, scrapbook photo album, baked cookies, or a decorated plate. This year my mom asked for homemade gifts from my kids instead of spending a lot of money. She said she does not need anything.

One possibility is to visit a paint-your-own-pottery store where my older son can decorate a bowl and I add my infant daughter's handprint on a plate. Then my son and I can bake some goodies and put them on the special plates. Not only does my mom receive wonderful mementos from my kids, but my kids also learn about giving from their heart and not get caught up in the holiday frenzy of consumerism.

Gina LaRoche, Key Partner and Facilitator, www.sevenstonesleadership.com

Ask yourself:

“What can I give somebody that doesn't take away from the resources of the planet?”

“What can I give somebody that adds to global community, e.g. Heifer International?”

- If you are going to purchase things, can you buy them from Ten Thousand Villages or locally made or indigenously made products?
- Have a specific list and shop around.
- Don't buy extra gifts for "just in case".
- Handmade gifts are special.
- Do you really need a Christmas tree? If you do, do you replant a tree?
- If you buy a Christmas tree, recycle it.
- Plan ahead for your food purchases. Buy local. Have a potluck and assign dishes to guests, have a budget and stick to it.
- Give gifts of service, such as yard work or baby sitting or volunteering at a soup kitchen or Meals on Wheels.
- Give of your time to family or friends or community. Keep it simple and easy.
- Write short stories, poems, mandalas, etc.
- Do a gratitude holiday without gifts.

Here are some suggestions that we wanted to pass along from other organizations:

Making the Holidays Less Materialistic for Children from Home on the Ranch Newsletter www.KidsHealth.org www.Teens-Health.org

Teach kids to question marketing messages from TV commercials and other ads. Record programs and view them skipping over the advertisements that are undesirable. Teach kids to want things in moderation and to fully appreciate what they have been given.

Focus on family traditions such as lighting the menorah or cooking together. If you don't have any tradition, talk to grandparents or other relatives about what they enjoy. Or start your own new traditions by making gifts or caroling with friends.

Teach kids to give of themselves. If volunteering begins at an early age, it can become a permanent part of their lives. Young children can give away some of their belongings to children who are less fortunate. Children who love animals can give pet food or supplies. Nursing homes or children's hospitals love to have visitors.

Give gifts with meaning such as albums with family photos, customized stationery hand made on the family computer, homemade potpourri or ornaments.

Give coupons for chores done such as washing cars or washing the dishes after a holiday meal.

Give a certificate to teach someone a computer skill.

Be a good role model. Show your kids that the holidays can be joyful and fulfilling, not just a stress-ridden time. Teach them the true meaning of the holidays and what it means to give and receive all year long.

Happy Holidays on a Budget www.Kiplinger.com

The holiday season brings a blizzard of temptations and guilt trips that can lead to out-of-control spending on gifts. That often leads to a post holiday hangover in the form of credit-card debt. Best advice: Batten down the hatches and spend less this year—preferably with money you already have. Use these suggestions as inspiration to create a more frugal, but just as happy, holiday.

Make a budget, check it twice. Use a budgeting Web site such as www.Mint.com to track purchases and see a realistic picture of what you are spending.

Don't gorge on credit. Be cautious also when using a debit card. Try www.eBillme.com, a service for making cash payments online. Use cash when possible

Use a layaway program. Many toy and department stores have them.

Trim your gift list and the number of gifts to any one person, including children. Elfster.com can help organize Secret Santa style exchanges. It will have a spending limit posted and keep track of participants' wish lists.

Use technology to save money. Check out sites such as www.GottaDeal.com - Black Friday page for the day after Thanksgiving sales. Look for savings coupons and shopping codes at sites such as www.RetailMeNot.com which offers coupons from more than 40,000 stores.

Think outside the gift box. Consider trading in some things you don't need. www.Gazelle.com buys old gadgets that you send in and even pays the shipping costs. Send the site your old cell phone and it will pay you via check, PayPal or even with an Amazon.com gift card.

We also love the “Simplify the Holidays Booklet” from New American Dream www.newdream.org.



www.GlobalSufficiency.org

The Global Sufficiency Network exists to fuel a global viral conversation for sufficiency - catalyzing action to address **scarcity as a fundamental root cause** of the environmental crises, the social justice crisis, the spiritual crisis and the economic crisis.

Are you tired of feeling like there is never enough?

Never enough money, never enough time, never enough support, never enough sleep, never enough quiet, never enough vacation, never enough.

Are you tired of feeling like you are not (good) enough?

Not smart enough, not attractive enough, not good enough, not successful enough, not thin enough. . . just not enough as a human being?

If you answered YES, then You're ready for more...

If you are tired of living in the context of scarcity, which creates all of this, you might be interested to learn about SUFFICIENCY.

"Scarcity as a chronic sense of inadequacy about life becomes the very place from which we think and act and live in the world. It shapes our deepest sense of ourselves, and becomes the lens through which we experience life."

- Lynne Twist, [The Soul of Money](#)

When we shift out of the mindset of scarcity and into the mindset of SUFFICIENCY, we start to notice how enough everything is around us. We give up the exhausting chase for more of what we don't really need and become exquisitely present to all that we have.

"When we live in the context of sufficiency, we find a natural freedom and integrity. We engage in life from a sense of our own wholeness rather than a desperate longing to be complete."

- Lynne Twist, [The Soul of Money](#)

As you transform scarcity into sufficiency, you have greater access to the wealth of inner resources that exist within you. You create an experience of life where wholeness, integrity and satisfaction are present and available to you – anytime you wish to access them.

Interested in transforming scarcity into sufficiency in your life and in the world?

If so, join the Global Sufficiency Network whose mission to spread the message and

practice of sufficiency for the creation of an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling and socially just human presence on the planet.

Our promise is that the Global Sufficiency Network provide information, inspiration, tools, resources, and connections needed to practice and spread sufficiency across the globe.

[Click here to find out more](#)

If you enjoyed this report, please feel free to pass it on to friends or family members. You have permission to put it up on your website or send it in an email. Please give it away.

Global Sufficiency Network is a non-profit organization. Our members and donors are a significant source of support for us. If you share our commitment to a world without scarcity and a global community living in sufficiency, then we ask you to consider supporting our Vision of a world transformed and restored by the promise of sufficiency where everyone experiences themselves, their resources and each other as enough.

We'd like you to consider supporting Global Sufficiency Network by becoming a member for as little as \$10 a month or by making a one-time donation. A contribution of any amount will make a difference.

<http://globalsufficiency.org>

How can you make these activities happen?

What holiday activities do you want to discontinue?

What steps do you need to take to make that happen?

What habits of excess (spending, doing, eating, drinking, etc) would you like to address?

How can you address these effectively and where will you look for support?

What practices (spiritual, physical, relational, etc) will support you in this holiday transformation?

Now, create a plan of action as to how you will transform your holidays.

To save paper, please print only pages 10 – 12.

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members. You have permission to put it up on your website or send it in an email.
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***Many Thanks to our Holiday Report Editors Polly Leonard and Linda Hurstad**