

Author Jill Palmquist Shares Guidance for Reconnecting at Holiday Celebrations During a Difficult Year

Life Time's VP Jill Palmquist shares ways people can find moments of connection and joy during upcoming seasonal celebrations.

CHANHASSEN, MN, UNITED STATES, December 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- It's the most wonderful time of the year...but many of people are struggling with feelings of tiredness, anxiety, and disconnection. "The holidays are hard, but lately, just being a human is even harder," says Jill Palmquist, vice president of Life Time and author of [In This Lifetime](#) (Wise Ink, September 2024, ISBN: 978-1-63489-689-4, \$105.00). "Packed calendars. Mandatory merriment. Endless invitations. You might be full of dread instead of holiday cheer."

There are many reasons people might be struggling. Between workforce shifts related to AI, the curated nature of social media, and lingering pandemic awkwardness, it's no wonder so many individuals find themselves disconnected from experiences that were once fulfilling.

But the holidays are a great time for people to reconnect with what makes them human, says Palmquist. When the world feels heavy, moments that pull people back into their hearts, minds, and bodies are valuable. And even in tough times—especially in tough times—those small moments of presence and warmth remind others of their capacity to feel true connection and joy.

Here are a few ways to reengage with seasonal gatherings.

Just go. "We are inherently lazy, so 'I have nothing to wear' is all you need for permission to party-skip," says Palmquist. "Forget that. Same leggings for three days? Get in there. The pressure to look perfect is exhausting. A solid 6 out of 10 effort is perfect."

Bring personal enthusiasm. "I have to go" energy can diminish an experience before it begins. Make an entrance. Remember, the host went to a lot of trouble; showing up fully is a gift.

Head for the food table. Come hungry and enjoy the apps. A lighthearted comment like "What's a Devil on Horseback?" is a great conversation starter. "Ask for a to-go bag and slip in a few deviled eggs for breakfast," says Palmquist. "The time for restraint is not now."

Embrace the mundane. “We’re all out of practice with party talk, but remember that this is not the place for intellectual discourse,” says Palmquist. “We’re starving for real conversation. Snow removal. Varicose veins. The truth is...boring is interesting when it’s honest.”

Turn complaints into connection. Complaining about challenges is second nature, and it can even lead to bonding. Turn grievances into stories that let people know they are not alone.

Embrace medical conditions. Ailments are great icebreakers. Joint replacement? Pure joy. Night sweats? Conversational gold. Fragility offers both entertainment and the privilege of budging the bathroom line, says Palmquist.

Ask the questions. Forget “How have you been?” Try “What’s the worst thing that happened to you in 2025?” “When did you last cry?” Don’t be afraid to put your foot in your mouth. That’s where the good stuff happens.

Revel in joy and wonder. No wonder people love the character Buddy from the film *Elf* so much. Embrace that childlike wonder. Sparking and sharing joy is a form of activism. We’re living in a world that doesn’t need more automation or perfection, filters, and feeds. It needs more delight and laughter.

AI can write the holiday newsletter, plan the trip, or suggest wine pairings for a deep-fried goose. But it can’t laugh, love, and connect. “Only we humans can do that,” concludes Palmquist. “Only we can get and give the best gift of the season, which is simply remembering we are alive.”

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About the Author:

Jill Palmquist is a celebrated author, engaging speaker, and VP/chief storytelling officer at Life Time. Jill’s message isn’t about personal development or leadership in the traditional sense—it’s about living fully, joyfully, and as your true, unique self.

Jill has spent over 20 years helping Life Time evolve into a beloved brand that has redefined the health club industry. Along the way, she’s been inspired by its millions of members and gathered insights, wisdom, and stories that illuminate what it means to live a healthy, happy life.

Her book, aptly titled *In This Lifetime*, is a manifesto that will help you notice, appreciate, and enjoy the beauty of being alive, give a gentle nudge to the brevity...and offer simple suggestions for making the most of this whole human experience.

About the Book:

In This Lifetime (Wise Ink, September 2024, ISBN: 978-1-63489-689-4, \$105.00) is available from Life Time, Inc.

About Life Time:

Life Time (NYSE: LTH) empowers people to live healthy, happy lives through its portfolio of more than 170 athletic country clubs across the United States and Canada. The health and wellness pioneer also delivers a range of healthy-way-of-life programs and information via its complimentary Life Time Digital app. The company's healthy living, healthy aging, healthy entertainment communities and ecosystem serve people 90 days to 90+ years old and is supported by a team of more than 45,000 dedicated professionals. In addition to delivering the best programs and experiences through its clubs, Life Time owns and produces nearly 30 of the most iconic athletic events in the country.

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