

December 23, 2022

Dear Placentia Library District Patrons,

How are you?

The holidays can be overwhelming and I wanted to take this time to check in on you. Let us take this very moment to breathe. It is absolutely ok to pause right now and settle into the internal peace we all need during one of the most stressful times of the year.

Now that you have discovered your mindful space, and as you make your last-minute gift purchases, remember it is ok if the gifts are not perfect – imperfection is healthy and normal! The illusion of perfection only brings temporary gratification – it is the thought of the gift that lasts a lifetime (like a book or a handwritten letter). A coupon from my children for surprise hugs or a pack of Pepsi tells me my children understand what is meaningful to me and what brings joy in my life! Do not lose sight of what really matters during the holidays or in your every day life. In the grand scheme of life, it is our relationships and connections with others that brings true fulfillment.

Family! We cannot live without them, yet during the holidays we may yearn for the old saying “absence makes the heart fonder.” It helps to recognize the idiosyncrasies which make up your unique family. and acknowledge the struggles to get along. In Daniel Pink’s book, [The Power of Regret: How Looking Backward Moves Us Forward](#), he outlines two ways to move past our regrets – either undo them or accept the “At Least It” approach. In undoing actionable regrets, we can apologize, make amends, or try to repair the damage. With the “At Least It” approach, find the silver lining – think about how the situation could have turned out worse and appreciate that it did not. Whether you choose to undo or ‘at least’ your regrets be intentional in your decision. We all recognize close relationships are what keep us happy throughout our lives and give us purpose in life. Afterall, we cannot control the behavior and actions of others, but we own ours and what we make of them is ours as well.

It is also ok if dinner is not Bon Appétit- picture perfect! Perhaps the family can make tamales or other family secret recipes to share. As I prepare my family Christmas dinner, I’ll be reflecting on the people whose presence brings joy to my family while listening to my favorite country and Christmas songs. We will gather in the kitchen as I pass along holiday traditions to my children. After dinner, grab your favorite drink and enjoy the beautifully decorated tree in your home. Don’t forget to take silly pictures to memorialize your 2022 holiday, including the ones with everyone’s faces covered with flour!

With heartfelt sentiments, I truly hope you are doing well and are at a mindful place to enjoy the holidays with family and friends. On behalf of the Library Board of Trustees and our staff, I wish you peace and many silver linings in 2023!

Respectfully,

Jeanette Contreras
Library Director

