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Receiving: The Flip Side of Giving

By Avalon De Witt

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Another winter holiday season is upon us, and the theme seems to be universal. You may call your holiday Christmas, Kwanza, Hanukkah, Ramadan, or Winter Solstice. It is a turning point, a time of celebrating light and the hope for new life. The common element is that we all consider it a time for honoring Spirit in our best and highest ways.

Here in the United States, the prevailing holiday is Christmas, and gift-giving is the major tradition. There are many stories behind the "why's" of this tradition. Many say it is to follow the example of the Magi who came to bestow their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh upon the Christ child. (See Matthew 2:9-11)

We want to have a joyous time, and remain mindful of our values. Yet, we often get caught up in the flurry of gift-giving fever, brought on by media pressures and society, and we forget to enjoy what others give us every day. In a time when people are saying "Peace on Earth, goodwill toward men," how is it that something meant to be so special can become so stressful?

Whenever we are feeling depleted from giving, it means we are not receiving enough. So much time and money goes into making our loved ones happy for the holidays that we wind up worrying how we're going to do it all. When you sacrifice your spirit, you are sacrificing too much.

Receiving is crucial for giving to be complete. In the famous story, The Gift of the Magi, by O. Henry, a man and wife find themselves lacking the funds to give each other what they wanted to for Christmas.

The two most valuable possessions they own are his watch and her hair. She sells her hair to buy him a fob for his watch, and he sells his watch to buy her some combs for her hair. By giving all they had left to give they each rendered the other's gift useless.

It's touching whenever anyone gives all they have to give. And one thing Christmas teaches us is that it truly is more blessed to give than to receive. So many of us want to be givers. However, if you are not able to fully receive when others are giving to you, you rob them of the blessing they receive as giver.

We need to allow ourselves to receive, as the Holy Mother of God received the Spirit. When we allow another's light to fill our darkness, their own darkness is also filled with light. When light is both given and received, the balance bridges a gap, creating a union, much like conception. What is created is a blessing.

This year, take time out for your spirit to receive. Spend some quiet time taking in the love you have been given, allowing its light to enrich you. Make it a silent night, a holy night.

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Avalon De Witt has practiced as a professional psychic and spiritual counselor for over 10 years and has studied the Tarot and other forms of divination for over 21 years. She has worked successfully with thousands of clients world-wide. Avalon believes that the Light of Divinity resides in us all, and she is devoted to revealing that Light in your life. Her focus is to show you how to tap into that source of unlimited power and knowledge within YOU.

## **Experts Question Flip-Flops In The Workplace And Their Effect On Our Feet.**

**By Jody Feinstein**

Women are wearing flip flops in the workplace more and more, especially in these warmer months. U.S. style experts believe that flip flops could be damaging not only our feet but our careers.

There are so many new styles of flip flops: beaded, leather, sequins that women feel it is easy to get away with wearing them to work.

An employee of West Glenn Communications comments that she wears flip-flops on the days she doesn't have important meetings with clients or avoids wearing them if she knows that someone who disapproves will be in the office.

Thousands of women across the country consider flip-flops an indispensable element in their summer wardrobe.

An Old Navy and Gap online survey showed that flip-flops were at the top of the list as summer work attire for high school and college students. More than 31 % of the women surveyed said that flip-flops were essential part for their summer work wardrobe.

Many companies feel differently.

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A spokeswoman for BNP Paribas says that if a dress code says no beachwear this includes flip flops.

Style experts advise that flip-flops could be detrimental to a career. Younger women are the ones who tend to wear them to work.

Style commentator Meghan Cleary says, "Shoes convey the mood of a woman. Wearing flip-flops conveys the mood that you are relaxed and on vacation. That's not a good message in the office,"

Doctors also have concerns about the effect of flip-flops on the feet.

Doctors at the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons say that flip-flops are connected to a rising number of heel problems among teens and young adults.

A representative recently said, "We're seeing more heel pain than ever in patients 15 to 25 years old, a group that usually doesn't have this problem." She said that thin soled flip-flops give no arch support and can intensify abnormal biomechanics in foot motion. This will ultimately cause pain and inflammation.

Flip-flops have been around for at least 70 years, originating from traditional Japanese woven, and possibly wooden soled sandals in New Zealand.

The Y-shaped and flat soled sandal is known all over the world and to all social classes. It is very common in developing countries for its affordable price and sometimes the only shoe used because it is easy to make.

The term "flip-flop" gets its name from the slapping sound the sandal makes when it hits the ground and the heel.

A few years ago the life of the flip flop changed completely. They became trendy and popular. All kinds of stores sell them in a variety of colors with all kinds of decorations. There is even a bridal Flip flop which is full of Swarovski crystals and sells for \$140.

In June 2005 the Northwestern University's champion woman's lacrosse team wore flip-flops to the White House to meet the President. It was considered inappropriate attire and the women were criticized

Ellen Campuzano, president of the Committee of Color and Trends, a New York-based forecasting service specializing in footwear and accessories, believes that flip-flops' popularity has almost run its course.

"Usually these trends come and go in about five years," she said. "I think we've reached the peak. They can't be any more widespread, so maybe next summer something will replace them."

Jody Feinstein is a freelance business dress code consultant for many large corporations.

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