**A Joyful Winter Solstice**

Many of you celebrate the traditional winter holidays of Christmas, Hanukah and Kwanza.  I celebrate the Winter Solstice and Christmas.  To me they are basically the same.  Both holidays represent the time of the year that the Sun or Son returns, December 21st is the longest night of the year with the promise that the next nights will be shorter, The Sun returns for longer periods of time.  Ancient man knew this.  They would light bonfires that they hoped would attract more Sun light for the next day.  It worked, so they continued it every year. I believe that Jesus was not actually born on December 25. Early Christians used that date because it was close to the honored Winter Solstice.  The inherent symbology was the same.  The Sun would return each year at this time. Christmas lights and Winter Solstice bonfires heralded the return of the Sun.  No matter what you celebrate. I hope the sacred light of this season burns deep within you and brings you joy, optimism and hope.

**In the Arms of my Inner Mother**

This blessed Christmas season I will again be honoring Mary, the Mother of Jesus in a richer, more personal manner.  To me, she is the symbol of the divine feminine that becomes the divine Mother to my sacred child.  Mary is the physical embodiment of the sanctity of earth through which spirit can manifest.  She joins with many other archetypes of the Great Mother – Eve, Demeter, and Isis to name a few.  In each case the Great Mother became the manifestation of the divine feminine principle that gave birth to a god force that she loved and nurtured. As with all archetypes that we collectively create this divine feminine principle is within us all, male and female.  We too have physical bodies which are connected to the sacred earth.  We too have the divine force that is giving birth to acts of love and generosity. We are the divine feminine integrating our spirit and soul as we journey on the sacred earth.  When I welcomed her into my life, my life and my relationship with my inner child was transformed.

Being nurtured by our Inner Mother is never more important than during the holiday season.  The holidays are when our Inner Children are really present and engaged.  It is also when they are the most fragile.  Our emotions are heightened at this time because of our Inner Children.  They are always hoping for something wonderful, magical and new to happen, but they may be disappointed. Many of us have had problematic childhoods.  The holidays tend to escalate whatever abuse prevails.  Our little ones remember and feel the pain of holiday disappointment and neglect.  One of the things most of us can reliably count on at this time is food or alcohol to be our best friend and deaden those emotions.  If your inner child equates food with love, security and nurturing the holidays can be fraught with opportunities to use food. Find out what food represents to your child. Allow your Inner Mother to provide you the love, compassion and nurturing you have always wanted and needed.  Can you feel Her arms around you?  Can you open your heart to Her?  She is the Mother that will never abandon or reject you.  She knows what you feel and honors those feelings.  She is the Mother that you have always wanted.

**My Inner Mother Saves the Holidays**

As children we were at the mercy of our parents. If they were happy, we were happy. If they were not, our expectations of magical holidays disappeared.  I remember many Thanksgivings and Christmases being filled with expectations of gifts, candy, family peace and harmony.  I was often disappointed.  Peace and love were disrupted by alcoholic outbursts by my stepfather. My Mother, who loved the holidays, did so much to provide us a beautiful Christmas to have them destroyed by her husband.  My little girl remembered all of that and was sad beginning at Thanksgiving.  Her birthday is in the middle between Thanksgiving and Christmas.    Years of this mild depression marred even the best of holidays.  I did not take control of the holidays for her.  I allowed her memories to be in control of me.  I discovered my Inner Mother a few years ago.  Her loving advice to me was to create Christmas for my little girl myself!  I could make sure she had what she needed and wanted.  I could make sure she would never be disappointed again. She is no longer at the mercy of others.  She has me and my Inner Mother!