

## Blue Christmas

### Description

Gentle Reader,

Does the over whelming need to be cheerful this season get you down? Perhaps you are like me and Christmas brings memories, and some of them are not go wonderful. It feels like an emergency. I have to figure something out or I will go down in a wash of self pity.

The first session with my personal trainer, daughter Priscilla Bell was a positive step and the floor exercises for strengthening the abs feel as though they are making my back less vulnerable. Arthritis pain is less and less. There were some tweaks as the exercises took their measure of my joints.

Christmas still felt blue. I am digging through old papers and came across the Christmas letter from 1993, the first communication to my friends since my first husband, Don Bell died the previous November. The letter begins "Who's going to dry my tears? Who's going to listen to my day? Who's going to plot the future with me now that Don Bell is dead?" What misery!

The letter ends with gratitude for you, my friends who are there for me to dry my tears and hear about my day.

Five years later, I married our good friend Chuck Finney, widowed the same time I was. Now it is five years since our last Christmas together. He died Epiphany 2008. Hard to realize I've been alone this long. Most of the time it is good. I have you, my family and my community at Saint Mark's to sustain me. But. Christmas feels blue.

I went back to Priscilla for more training. Action, in my world, leads to mental health as well as physical health. This week she gave me weight bearing exercises with 5 pound weights. OMG. Much harder than the ones I was already doing on my own. She noticed, rightly, that my shoulders are getting rounded from sitting too much and not standing tall. This happens with age and if we want to keep going into our 90's, we have to work on building those larger upper back muscles. When strengthened they will open the chest and hold us tall. The added benefit for the person with osteoarthritis and spinal stenosis,

or any joint pain, is that a stronger upper back relieves the stress on the lower back. She told me I was working my lower back way too much.

Two close and dear friends are suffering from terrible arthritis pain these days. One visited her naturopath who recommended the Paleo Diet: all vegetables and protein. No grains or dairy (including cheese. Yep, you got that right.) You can read my post <http://nowheelchair.wordpress.com/2012/03/19/it-comes-down-to-what-we-eat/> and watch the TED talk there by the amazing woman who was in a wheelchair when she changed her diet to this Paleo thing and is now healthy.

Does that plunge you into another low Blue Christmas? Thinking about that kind of diet when you just went out and bought those beautiful cheeses and crackers, cream and butter for the feasts you are preparing? Yes.

Be of good cheer. January 2<sup>nd</sup> is coming. Make a resolution to try the diet thing to rid yourself of pain. If you want help with extra pounds, I'm your girl: the expert Turnaround Specialist. Give me 1600 days to get the new regimen into your system, watching the inches melt away as you behave themselves. Then keep it up for another 90 days to cement your new exercise habits. This is the 180 turnaround we want for



2013. Shaklee has a new program called 180 Turnaround. Join

me. I'm going to do it and will be glad to lead the way.

For now, be of good cheer without denying that this season can be tough. Put on your rain gear and go outdoors. The low lying hills are calling and the roads are clear.

Merry Christmas! And keep moving.

Before you go, post a comment about your Blue Christmas. Ask for kindness back to you.

Fondly, Betsy

Be Well, Do Well and Keep Moving

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## Category

1. Arthritis
2. Be Well health tips
3. Health and Fitness
4. Keep Moving: Managing Arthritis

## Tags

1. arthritis
2. arthritis pain
3. back pain
4. diet
5. exercise
6. joint pain
7. managing arthritis
8. osteoarthritis
9. paleo diet
10. spinal stenosis

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