

Winter: Happy or Miserable?

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I am often aware that I grew up in a mindset of enjoying winter rather than complaining about it. Now, living in suburbia where it is a bit more temperate than the far north of Wisconsin, people bond with how awful winter is and that it must be endured.

For the people of the far north of Wisconsin, it is more often like living from one nice outside thing to the next in anticipation of the fun things of winter: skiing, horse drawn sleigh fun, snowshoeing, bird and deer watching, hunting, book clubs, gatherings at local places for cribbage, dominoes, hot chocolate, tea, and coffee. These things are fun! Cold and snow are expected.

Some studies show that the differences from a happy winter to a miserable one has to do with attitude. If a person has grown up in a place like New Jersey, where I once lived, summer times at the Shore are seen as the only fun times of the year. Winter is seen as a drag to be endured. Warm weather then is the goal for happy times. When people of Norway move into winter, they even have a name for the cozy times of joy winter brings. It is called: *kosilig. It means, though much, much more than this, times of sweet comfort with surroundings and people; for example, in front of a fire. Norwegians also have a saying: "There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing."

Attitude changes many things. One interesting study I've read recently suggests that a shift from marital /relationship troubles can come when one's attitude changes from listing the lack in one's marriage in one's mind to: "What would a great husband/wife do in this situation?" These shifts are not extremely hard. Whether it is "how can I enjoy winter" or "what would a great husband, wife, friend, do right now in this situation," people can make shifts toward more enjoyment of the time and space they are in.

*The Norwegian Secret to Enjoying a Long Winter

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