



DECEMBER 2015



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# Deck the Halls???

'Tis the season, and everywhere you look, there's evidence that Christmas is right around the corner. The most conspicuous of these signs is simple: decorations. Even where snow does not fall, people deck their houses with garlands of ivy and pine, adorn their doorways with wreaths, and weave lights into the trees and bushes on their property. Nothing screams Christmas like the décor.

But... Could the decorations in your yard or, in the case of many students, in their dorm, say anything more about you? Research done by Werner, Peterson-Lewis and Brown (1989) suggests that residents may use their holiday decorations to communicate their friendliness to their neighbors. Researchers presented participants with two pictures, each featuring either a decorated house or a plain house, and asked the participants how friendly the people living in those houses were. Sure enough, participants rated the individuals living in the decorated house as more friendly than those living in an undecorated house. They also perceived the people living in the decorated house as being more integrated and connected with their community. Other research demonstrated that neighborhoods with more decorations were less likely to be targeted by robbers, possibly because the décor indicates a strong community.

So, when thinking about whether or not to decorate your living space for Christmas this year, think about some of the psychological benefits!

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# “The Best Way to Spread Christmas Cheer is Singing Loud for All to Hear!” - Buddy the Elf

Judging by the number of times I’ve heard “Frosty the Snowman” in the past few days, the holidays must be quickly approaching. As I walk through the mall, Christmas carols are playing in each store and every restaurant. But why is it that we need music to get us in the holiday spirit?



Music reminds us of our past. It reminds us of the wonderful moments we had sipping peppermint hot chocolate with our siblings by the warm fire talking about anything and everything, baking cookies with Mom to place by the chimney, stringing up lights with Dad, crafting the perfect wish list to leave out for Santa, and volunteering at local charities with friends. All the while, Christmas carols played in the background, etching themselves into our brains as reminders of our good fortune. Music is an incredibly powerful tool to evoke these feelings of nostalgia.

Music activates both the limbic system, one of the primary emotional regions of the brain, and the precuneus, a part of the cortex involved in the recall of autobiographical and episodic memory. The more familiar we are with a song, the more likely we are to have a memory associated with it and (thankfully) that memory is likely to be a fond, vivid one. So next time you hear “Jingle Bells” or “Grandma Got Run Over by A Reindeer,” that exact moment could be getting encoded into your long-term memory .



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
9:00-9:30	Chase	Jenny		
9:30-10:00	Chase	Jenny		
10:00-10:30	Chase	Kevlyn	Kevlyn	Chase
10:30-11:00	Chase	Kevlyn	Kevlyn	Chase
11:00-11:30	Chase	Kevlyn	Kevlyn	Chase
11:30-12:00	Chase	Kevlyn	Kevlyn	Chase
12:00-12:30		Kevlyn	Kevlyn	Chase
12:30-1:00	Jenny	Kevlyn	Kevlyn	Chase
1:00-1:30	Jenny	Chase	Kevlyn	Jenny
1:30-2:00	Jenny	Chase	Kevlyn	Jenny
2:00-2:30	Jenny	Chase	Sal	Jenny/Sal
2:30-3:00	Jenny	Chase	Sal	Sal
3:00-3:30	Jenny/Kevlyn	Chase	Jenny/Sal	Sal
3:30-4:00	Kevlyn	Chase/Jenny	Jenny/Sal	Sal
4:00-4:30	Kevlyn	Jenny	Jenny/Sal	Sal
4:30-5:00	Kevlyn	Jenny	Jenny/Sal	Sal

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## What do you enjoy most about the holiday season?

### CAMPUS QUOTES

- ◇ “Hmmm, I love the holiday food! Obviously!”  
~ Lauren Niger
- ◇ “What I enjoy most about the holiday season is the atmosphere of kindness, giving, and warmth. I love the traditions of spending time with your loved ones and continuing old and or starting new traditions. The holiday season always consists of the best memories!”  
~ Kai Stringer
- ◇ “The relaxation of being home and not having to stress over homework”  
~ Mark Bradley
- ◇ “Spending time with my family! I also enjoy the atmosphere, good food, music, decorations, and cold weather too!”  
~ Anna Shepardson

## THINKING ABOUT ADDING AN EMPHASIS IN PSYCHOLOGY?

**Behavioral/Clinical Applications**

**Business/Organizational Applications**

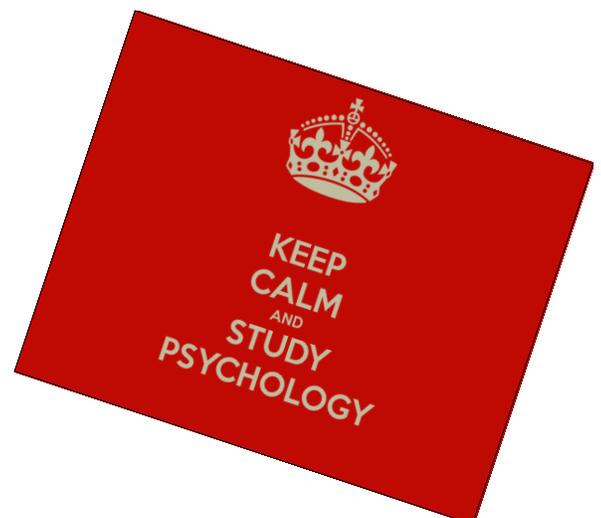
**Family and Child Development**

**Health and Wellness Applications**

**Law and Criminal Behavior Applications**

**Psychobiology**

**Sports Psychology Applications**



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## IT'S A NEW DAWN . . . AND I'M FEELING GOOD

Each New Year's Day marks the beginning of change for some people. Whether symbolic or simply just "for the heck of it," it's something some have tried maybe once in their lifetime: a resolution for the better.

According to Marist Poll, about 44% of Americans reported having a New Year's Resolution for 2015. However, of those Americans, only 59% kept their word. Why is it hard to maintain a New Years Resolution? Here are 5 tips to make sure your "New Year's resolution stick!"

### 1) Start small

- Decide on small resolutions that are attainable. If your resolution is to lose weight, then choosing to exercise 3 days out of the week instead of all 7 days might help you in the long run.

### 2) Change one behavior at a time

- If your resolution focuses on changing behaviors that you are unhappy with, then changing them all at once may not be the best idea. Instead, focus on one at a time and work your way there. Set time frames for milestones in order to achieve your desired goal.



### 3) Talk about it and ask for support

- The APA suggests that you share your experiences with your family and friends. Sharing your struggles and successes with someone makes the process easier.

### 4) Do not beat yourself up

- Whatever goal you have in mind, know that it takes time and effort. Failure and small

missteps are a normal part of the process. If you missed a day at the gym, it is okay. Just continue with your gym routine and get back on track!

### 5) Make it meaningful

- Making your goals both attainable and important to you will make it easier for you to stick with them. Relate the goals to something meaningful like your personal values and aspirations.

Set your mind to it, work hard, and succeed!

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/resolution.aspx>

<http://maristpoll.marist.edu/tag/new-years-resolutions/>

<http://qz.com/318967/the-science-behind-new-years-resolutions-that-actually-stick/>



# It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Finals

With finals on the way, it can be stressful to balance the amount of work, study, sleep, and fun we need to get into the day. Sometimes it just seems impossible. Though we can't make our work load go away, we can take action to try to decrease our stress level. Here are a few tips to help lessen the stress of the finals weeks of the semester.



- 1) **Plan Ahead:** Don't let finals sneak up on you! Stay organized and try to start studying before the night before.
- 2) **Take a Deep Breath:** When you begin to feel overwhelmed, take a step back and take some deep breaths. You Got This!
- 3) **Get Your Beauty Sleep:** Getting sleep helps with retaining information and allowing you to stay focused on your tasks.
- 4) **Find Time to Laugh:** During your study breaks, look up funny videos, dance with your roommates, or watch an episode of your favorite comedy. It will help you relax so you can concentrate when its time to get back to work.

Good luck students during your finals week and have an enjoyable break!





How can I get involved in research?!

# Research Opportunities

You can be involved in research in the Psychology Department at CLU a few ways!

- **You can be a participant!**

Participation is vitally important to research. Without participants; we wouldn't be able to conduct our studies. Participation in research is one of the easiest, most helpful ways to get involved with research. See below for more information about how to participate in a study.

- **You can learn to conduct research in a number of classes, including Research Methods, Statistics, Cognition, and Human Memory.**

Research Methods and Human Memory students actually do their OWN studies, from start to finish!

- **You can apply to work on a research team.**

- ⇒ Usually, applications are considered at the end of each school year for a spot in the lab in the following year. Each professor has a different deadline for their team.
  - ⇒ Email specific professors for more information about their research team.
  - ⇒ To work on a research team, it's helpful to know the basics of statistics and research methods. Some professors require students to take these foundational classes before they can work on a research team.
- Check with specific professors to see their requirements before applying.

## How to participate in a study

This year we are using an online system to schedule participants for our studies. Faculty and their research teams, along with students in research methods classes, are using this system to organize participants. This system replaces the old "salmon card" system, and in addition to being "green" is also more efficient.

If you are in a class that requires or encourages research participation, go to this website:

<https://callutheran.sona-systems.com>

Click "Request Account" to begin the free registration process.

Once you have an account, you will be able to log in and see the available studies, and the open time slots for those studies. Pick a study and a time slot that works for you, and follow the study-specific instructions to participate.

