

Can I Celebrate This New Year?

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A very happy and healthy 2005 to our readers, subscribers, supporters, agonists, antagonists, members, fellows, trustees, honorees, staff, and to all people throughout the far corners of the Earth. I wish you good health, long life, joy, and the support of your family and friends about you.

As members of a significant healthcare profession and as active participants in community affairs, many of us feel a sense of urgency in regard to the world around us. The world is in turmoil; not only in the Middle East, but in the Sudan, Bosnia, North Korea, Iran, Afghanistan, and Haiti. The polar ice mass is moving inexorably toward the equator, threatening us with inundation. (Hint: buy lifeboat stocks.) Global warming will create tropical fish in Baffin Bay and palm trees in Murmansk. Abroad, poverty abounds, and the walking skeletons that once were children are kept alive by donations of handfuls of rice and locally polluted water. If they should be fortunate enough to reach adulthood, they will be uneducated, unskilled, jobless, and homeless, alive only because of the heroic efforts being made today by international agencies of mercy and their own tenacity.

Here at home, there is abject poverty and malnutrition despite the contributions of charitable organizations. There have been insufficient funds allotted for advanced research designed to eliminate genetic disorders, a lack of motivation to prevent the spread of certain acquired diseases, the placing of many young American men and women in harm's way, an FDA caught up in partisan politics, an

alarmingly high rate of penal recidivism, the ravaging of many fecund forests and preserves, and the continuing practice of using the death penalty (the US is the only Western nation that still supports this punitive action).

On the more hopeful side, this is the greatest, most free country in the world. Our interests in our fellow human beings extend beyond our geographic borders. There are wonder drugs and exotic forms of medical therapy readily available. Our citizens are able to wander anywhere without the need for identity cards or in fact, any identification, and can carry and keep firearms. There is freedom of information, which makes the publication of periodicals, newspapers, and journals like this one available in print as well as digitally.

Our Academy, which appears to be thriving in this 21st century milieu, had its best year in 2004, its second largest meeting, its largest influx of new members and fellows, its most successful *Journal*, its burgeoning newsletter, its influential Research Foundation, its promotions of scholarship and good deeds, and its encouragement to the freshly emerging, the currently active, and the elegant veteran implantologists. These legacies are ours. We have earned them with hard work and sincere desires to promote the integrity of our profession. Maintaining these legacies is not easy, but our efforts to do so are worth the trials, the pain, the controversy, and the polemics that can be so confounding.

To those who see this page, may you be granted your every desire. May wrongdoing disappear, and may you be blessed with the beneficence which is endowed in every person upon deliverance to this Earth.

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