

A Christmas Kiss

2020 has taken its toll on everyone and now, as the year comes to a close, as a result of Covid, there is another unfortunate (if less serious) casualty, one of Christmas's traditions.

The origins of the tradition date back thousands of years and, ironically, spring from the healing properties of a plant – mistletoe. Originally, valued by the ancient Greeks and Romans as a cure, about 2000 years ago the Celts, being Celts, are believed to have introduced the idea that it could cure romantic woes (although, possibly Odin's wife, Frigg, the Norse goddess of love, might have been involved as well). Either way, by the 1700s, mistletoe had become a Christmas decoration and it was deemed permissible to kiss a woman standing under the mistletoe. Over the years as equality took hold, it became the norm that anybody standing under the mistletoe could be kissed.



Since kissing is not possible while maintaining social distance, the advice in many countries around the world at present is to avoid mistletoe and forego the kisses it can bring. This may dampen the joy of people around the globe, particularly in Japan where Christmas is a romantic occasion, so we thought that BEX should share a socially distanced Christmas Kiss to compensate a little. No mistletoe required.

The kiss in question is an acronym, which stands for **K**eeP, **I**mprove, **S**top and **S**tart – and “Kiss Analysis” is a tool in the excellence toolbox which provides a simple yet powerful way to improve something.

For example, as the year ends (and what a year it has been!), we could review and reflect on our personal and professional lives and think about which aspects of them we should **K**eeP “as is,” what we should **I**mprove, and what we should **S**top as well as what we don't do that it might be good to **S**tart. With all of the changes we have faced this year, undoubtedly, there is plenty to reflect upon; more time with family, changed working conditions, less travel/commuting – which of these would you like to keep? Maybe there are things you would like to stop altogether, or start something new. Keep, Improve, Start and Stop. It's a simple formula but, then again, kissing has never been all that complicated.

P.S. When asked to comment on whether Santa had ever stood under the mistletoe, one of Santa's elves refused to answer saying only that Jimmy Boyd (trust an elf to know who first sang *I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus*) was known for his voice, not his eyesight.