

## **Survive The Holidays With These Simple 5 Tips**

The holidays can bring unwanted stress into many peoples lives. Some people find it to not be 'The Most Wonderful Time of the Year'. Our scheduled become packed with family events, friend gatherings and volunteer tasks, and we become overwhelmed and unable to find the joy in the season. On top of that we have to put on our happy face even though we might be [grieving](#) inside. So here are a few less-typical Holiday Survival Tips. Maybe you'll find a golden nugget in here.

### **Ditch Obligations**

Just because you've always gone to Aunt Sue's for Christmas Eve doesn't mean you always have to. You can stop going.

Say, "I'm starting a new tradition this year, I'm really looking forward to cooking with my kids and having a quiet family night." Then set up another time to visit Aunt Sue when you'll actually be able to visit her, instead of just a hug between appetizers while stuffed into a small house with 30 loud relatives.

### **Reframe Obligations**

When I hear people complain about all the 'stuff' they have to do, I usually say, "Stop doing it!" The typical reply is, "Oh, but I really like cooking a feast so we can have plenty of leftovers". If you enjoy cooking a feast than that's great! I can respect that. But, if you don't, stop looking at it as a chore. Do it because you want to, because it brings you joy. Quit doing it because you "have" to do it. You can always start a new tradition by going out to eat. Then you won't have to cook and clean the dishes afterwards.

### **Surround Yourself People That Bring Meaning and Joy Into Your Life.**

Some of us are not close with our families. For many, many people, family relationships are rarely nourishing and often painful. We've built friendships that stand in for the sibling and parental relationships that will simply never be fulfilling.

So why feel obligated to spend a holiday with anyone other than those who bring us joy and unconditional love? Create a holiday plan with the people you most enjoy and cherish. or at the very least, an escape plan to unwind with the people who will let you vent after a stressful family interaction.

### **Step Back From the Gift-giving (and receiving) Or Just Change It Dramatically**

Do you really want another candle or chemical-laded bath set. Do you really want to be giving that to someone else? Blech. Maybe it's time to reexamine your gift-giving habits. Instead of exchanging gifts with your adult friends and family, can you decide to spend that money having a great dinner together in January. Or if there are younger kids within the family agree to not exchange gifts with your adult friends and family and use that money to go towards the kids gift or their college education.

If you feel really attached to giving a tangible object, you simplify the process. Find one universal gift, and give it to all your people. A jar of local honey from your favorite local

apiary, a gift card to one of your favorite local farms or a holiday ornament purchased from a local small business.

### **Rethink Your Assumptions**

Just because you've always done the holidays a certain way, doesn't mean you have to keep doing that. It's all your choice. Sometimes you don't even need to change the pattern, just recognizing that it's a choice is enough.

What changes have you made to improve your holiday season? Help a sister out and share in the comments!

Wishing you a happy, merry, joyous whatever-you-celebrate. I hope you get exactly the holiday you want (and deserve) this holiday season.