

How to Have a Restorative Holiday

1. If you are taking days off from work, honor your rest and don't work.
2. Many people cannot be with family or friends during the holiday or have chosen not to spend the holidays with others. This is sad and may be lonely. Let yourself feel what you feel then find a way to be in touch.
3. Respiratory viruses tend to circulate more during the winter months, and gatherings can make it easier for them to spread. For those of you who are getting together with family and friends, try to use as many virus [mitigating strategies](#) as possible. That means, stay home if you're sick, keep good airflow in indoor spaces, and consider masking if anyone is at higher risk or if local illness rates are up. Smaller groups and time outdoors can also lower the chance of getting sick.
4. Getting together with family may cause tensions due to political differences. Here are some suggestions for managing different views:
 - a. Put family connection first; the purpose of family time is affirming love and affection.
 - b. Try to create a politics-free time/zone, especially at the dinner table.
 - c. We all live in media-created information bubbles and what we "know" can be very different depending on the "bubble" we are in.
 - d. Remember that we rarely change people's views.
 - e. If someone wants to have a political conversation, agree on the ground rules first.
 - i. Make sure talking in a way that is respectful of the other person is one of the ground rules.
 - ii. A good question is "Tell me how you came to have that belief?" That question gets at the history of the person's thinking and feeling and is often less contentious than asking them, "Why do you believe that?"
 - f. If the conversation gets hostile, have some redirecting questions or phrases ready on hand:
 - i. "So, what did you think of the football game?"
 - ii. "I have to check on the pie."
 - iii. "Is that a new shirt you are wearing?"
 - g. Suggest a pause to express what each person is grateful for.
5. While there is much suffering in our world this holiday season, there is also much to affirm and appreciate. Savor moments of beauty, peacefulness, pleasure, and connection.

Finally, think of taking care of yourself this holiday as your contribution to the collective.

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