

December 2017

6 Mindfulness Tips to Bring Some Peace and Calm to the Holidays



The holiday season can be a stressful time—whether you are dealing with family or mingling at work holiday parties. Try these mindfulness strategies to reduce stress and bring a calm and attentive approach to your holiday this year. Mindfulness is a way to be open and aware of what is happening in the moment—being present both internally and externally. Mindfulness has been shown to improve relationship satisfaction, reduce stress, and increase empathy. Mindful practices can also help reduce internal stress and anxiety.

- 1. Practice active listening.** It's easy to tune out during holiday dinners and get-togethers, but try being attentive by using active listening, paying close attention and attempting to comprehend the message behind the words. You might be surprised how rewarding and also how much more you will observe and hear. Active listening works best when you minimize distractions, so put away your smartphone, turn off the TV, and turn down the music so that you can hear what people are saying.
- 2. Be open to the emotions of others.** By being attentive and receptive to the people around you, you can increase your ability to connect. Observe how people are feeling during the holidays, and be open to the communication of those feelings.
- 3. Be open to a range of emotions in yourself.** Holidays can bring up a whole host of different emotions—and not all of them happy or celebratory. For many, the holidays can be reminders of loss, grief, or loneliness. You might experience these difficult feelings, especially when loved ones are absent, so allow yourself to make space and acknowledge whatever emotions come up for you rather than trying to get rid of them.
- 4. Expand how you communicate care.** The holidays often mean gift-giving for many cultures, though there are many other ways of showing that you care. These can include spending quality time, expressing how you feel about them directly, or doing something nice and supportive.
- 5. Balance the “should’s” with awareness of your own needs.** Holiday obligations can be important but be sure to balance them with awareness of your own needs. Operating on obligations alone and trying to please everyone's expectations can lead to resentment and burnout. Rather than focus solely on planning the perfect dinner or getting the perfect gift, observe how these expectations affect you. Make sure to take the time and space you need to nourish yourself in the meantime.
- 6. Practice self-compassion.** During a busy holiday season, don't forget to take care of yourself. Get regular sleep and exercise and take time to do relaxing or fun things so that you can recharge. Taking care of yourself allows you to be more attentive and calmer when you're with others during the holidays. You may even find that by taking care of yourself it is possible to be kinder and more giving to others.

Modified from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/urban-survival/201612/8-mindfulness-tips-during-the-holidays>

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