

Will I or Won't I? How Do I Decide?

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Welcome back! Lisa here. Hopefully last week's post helped you set some expectations for your holiday season. Now that you have the main ingredients you need to have an enjoyable holiday season you may have realized that your expectations don't necessarily match up with what other people want you to do.

Just like you've figured out what *you* need to make your holiday season great, other people have figured that out too, and in some cases, they're going to want you to do things that make *their* holiday enjoyable. It's great when their expectations line up with yours, but what happens when they don't? You're going to have to tell someone "no." And that doesn't always go over well, especially during the holidays.

Clashes could arise over traveling or hosting a holiday gathering, events that your family or friends want you to attend, and school/work/community events that typically require your attendance, planning, and/or participation. So, how do you decide what to do and, sometimes more importantly, what *not* to do?



YES!



NO!

The first thing to remember is that *you don't have to do it all*. There may be a number of holiday traditions that you and your family are opting out of or changing this year, and that's okay. You may also just not have the energy or bandwidth to do everything you normally do during the holiday season.

Think back to last week's exercise and keep your expectations in mind. Talk with your family about their expectations and if you all have different priorities and expectations, then come to some sort of compromise. If there are things that are really important to your kids or your partner/spouse that just aren't that important to you, let them take charge of making those things happen.



The holidays are a great time for outsourcing. You and your spouse/partner can divide and conquer. Your kids can also help out with tasks that they can manage on their own. There may be holiday tasks that you have always done on your own, but this is a great time of year to ask for and accept some help, even if it means that things don't go exactly the way you envision. Remember what's actually more important to you- spending time with family and enjoying one another or creating a "Pinterest-perfect" holiday.



If there are things that you and your family want to be part of your holiday this year, figure out if you need to do them yourself or if someone else could do them- whether that's ordering some components of your holiday meals instead of cooking the entire thing yourself or finding shortcuts to get other things done, like getting help with running errands instead of doing everything yourself.

Getting your kids involved in helping out with holiday-related tasks also helps take care of a big thing that comes up at this time every year— what to do with the kids during winter break. As I'm sure you know, kids need to have some structure during winter break or the transition back to school after the holidays can be a struggle. This will be true this year whether your kids have been attending school in person or virtually. They will have *a lot* of time on their hands and they'll need something to do. But the reality is that you can't keep your kids entertained 24/7 during the break- they have to do some of that themselves. Having holiday-related tasks for them to do can be a big help, especially if the tasks are related to things that are important to them. Get them to help with making and putting up decorations or sorting through ornaments. If your kids are old enough to cook on their own, this might be a good year to allow them to take over preparing part of your holiday meal.



No matter how much you plan out your holiday, unexpected requests are going to come up. Check out our handy *Holiday Decision Tree* to help you choose whether you're saying "yes" or

“no” to requests. You won’t be able to get out of everything you don’t want to do but asking yourself a few simple questions can make it much easier to decide which requests to accept and when you need to give yourself a break. At the end of the day, the goal is to make sure that you and your family enjoy the holiday.

