



The Lexington Group, Inc.

Your Employee Assistance Program

6 Ways to Improve Family Holidays

On television, holiday celebrations look like festive times filled with joy. However, for many of us, there are unresolved tensions with some family members that cause disagreements every year.

Here are six realistic things you can do pro-actively to improve family get-togethers:

- 1. Bring your sense of humorous perspective to every family visit or call.** Instead of dwelling on your discomfort, you can regain your sense of strength and clarity by thinking silently to yourself "Thank goodness for my family."
- 2. Establish realistic expectations about the holidays.** It is easy to expect too much of family gatherings, especially the holidays. When we have expectations which are not met, we should remember that families aren't "perfect" and avoid pushing those expectations onto situations and people that cannot meet them.
- 3. Lobby ahead of time to create alliances and positive changes in the way your family gets together.** Brainstorm what can be done to make the next holiday visit more comfortable and less stressful.

4. Focus on a few positive goals for what will make the family gathering worthwhile for you. Strive to spend quality time with a loved one or give your own kids a chance to get to know their extended family better. You can feel fortunate that you achieved these important goals during your visit.

5. Plan with your spouse or partner how to stay united as a team. You can plan to check in with each other at the holiday gathering. Let your partner know that you may need verbal reassurance - "We're in this together." and "I'm on your side." Or nonverbal encouragement like a quick hand squeeze or active listening when you are speaking at the family dinner table.

6. Set personal boundaries and limits. Be realistic about what your time. Make a list and prioritize the most important activities. Always think before committing to any responsibility or social event. Learn to say "no" politely but firmly to keep your holiday time manageable. Regarding the holidays, set a sensible budget.

Remember the goal at a family gathering is not perfection, but to enjoy a few quality moments and shared memories with people that you may not get to see very often.

How The Lexington Group Can Help

The Lexington Group can help set up confidential Online or Face-to-Face Counseling.
Request service and find out additional information at: The-Lexington-Group.com

For 24/7 support call:

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1-800-676-4357

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