

# HOLIDAY SURVIVAL 101

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## HOW TO RESPOND TO UNWANTED QUESTIONS

### BE DIRECT

- "I'd rather not get into it."
- "[Work / dating / etc.] is stressing me out right now. Can we talk about something else?"
- "I don't feel like talking about that, but thanks for asking."

### OR

### PIVOT

- "How about you?"
- "How's your [health / golf game / kids / etc.]?"
- "How 'bout them [sports team of choice]?"
- "Can you believe the weather this year?"
- "What are you doing for Christmas / Hanukkah / New Year's?"

## HOW TO DEAL WITH DRINKING

### YOURSELF



- Drink mindfully, checking in frequently with your mind and body.
- Drink lots of water, and avoid drinking alcohol on an empty stomach.
- Arrange to spend the night, or for a ride with a designated driver ahead of time.
- **If you're not drinking alcohol and others ask why...**
  - Either be honest about the reason, or say it's a personal choice.
  - If others push alcohol on you, ask them to respect your choice, or lighten the mood with a joke.

### FRIENDS AND FAMILY

- Plan to arrive and leave holiday events early to minimize your exposure to others drinking heavily.
- Or, skip events that will center around drinking.
- Do not feel pressured to 'match' how much your family members drink.
- If your kids will be exposed to heavy drinking, talk to them about drinking and the associated risks.



## HOW TO SET AND RESPECT BOUNDARIES

### PHYSICAL

- "I'm not a big hugger."
- Silently step away or dodge others' attempts at physical contact.
- If others continue to cross your physical boundaries, keep stating them over and over.
- Know your limits. Will you tolerate plate-throwing or shoving? At what point will you leave the event?
- Try not to take it personally if others don't want physical contact. They're likely just sensitive to touch. Respect their boundaries.

### FINANCIAL

- If asked to participate in Secret Santa or White Elephant, be specific about how much you can spend.
- Ask for help, or opt out of some traditions.

### EMOTIONAL

- Let others know when something they've said hurts you.
- If you know others are intentionally trying to push your buttons, don't respond.
- Take breaks; step out for air or help with chores.