

Make the holidays your own

It's that time of year again. You look at the calendar and feel the pressure of the holidays closing in. No matter what traditions or festivities you celebrate or whether you plan on spending this year with family, friends or alone, there is no singular portrait of the holidays. Make the holidays your own by planning in a way that is best for you.

Consider your holiday goals based on whether you plan on spending the season...

...With yourself

Before the holidays, set aside a couple of days to examine what you're really looking for. Is it solitude and self-care to recharge your battery? Is this the time to explore cultural roots or a chance to serve your community? What do you want your holiday traditions to be? Take this time to enjoy activities you may not get to if you spent the season with others.

...With family

Families come in all shapes and sizes. Plan your holidays based on what suits your particular needs. For younger families, this is a good time to start experimenting and discover events and traditions you enjoy. For large groups, it can be chaotic to attempt a lot of activities – consider simplifying and focusing on just a few favorites this year. If the holidays need to be divided between families, the planning can be complicated but be assured, kids often don't mind celebrating more than once.

...With a partner

Spending the holidays with your significant other can create magical memories. Some things to consider when sharing the holidays with your partner include:

- Conflicting traditions
- Sharing time between families
- Negotiating a budget
- Compromising over events and activities
- Differences in availability and time off

...With friends

You've probably heard of "Friendsgiving," but there's no reason why you can't spend other holidays with friends as well. Enjoying quality time with people who love and support you can make the season just a little brighter. If you and your friends celebrate different holidays, cooperate and experience a variety of different cultures and traditions throughout the season.

Trying to accomplish every holiday goal this holiday season is tempting yet unrealistic. Visualize what you need and want and take the holidays into your own hands.

The holiday toolkit

