



EXECUTIVE VITALITY™: HOW TO AVOID GOING INSANE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Holidays and family. It can be the best of times. It can be the worst of times. Here are some ways you can go into the holidays ready and come out of them renewed, refreshed, and basking in the glow of the warmth and light that the holidays can bring.

1. **Be prepared.** Know your triggers. You probably know what theirs are too. Think about how you want to respond if Aunt Evelyn starts in on a political rant of diametrically opposed views from yours. What will make you feel positive about your interaction? What will make you say: “I handled that well. I did not sell out, and I did not participate on Aunt Evelyn’s level. I can love Aunt Evelyn without loving her views. I am proud of myself.” This could involve respectful, non-angry engagement to truly try to see the other side. Or, if you believe that is impossible, it might be time for that post-dinner walk, or whatever might remove you from the situation.
2. **Stick to your self-care routine.** This is not the time to stop exercising, stop meditating, stop being careful about what you eat or drink, etc. On the other hand, if you are not already doing any of those things, it could be a good time to start. We all know the fuse-shortening potential of sleep deprivation. If you are tired, all your best intentions can be for naught.
3. **Plan at least one real break.** If you will be staying with family for an extended period of time, it does not mean you have to be tied at the hip at all times. Carve out some “me time” that will be completely stress-free and nurturing.
4. **Ask for something positive.** That could be anything from suggesting the whole family go to a film together, to asking for a special dietary request, to buying a gift for yourself. If your family exchanges gifts, that could help you maintain your vitality through the holidays and beyond.
5. **Despite all, be grateful.** It is hard to be stressed out when you are in touch with all the good things, people, and events in your life that you are grateful for. It is useful from time to time to make a list of those things and, when you are down, look at it. Add to your list periodically. Focus on it when Aunt Evelyn gets on your nerves.

If your family members are really toxic and you just aren’t ready or just don’t feel like going through another miserable holiday with them, don’t do it. It’s ok to make other plans. Be loving and kind while being yourself.

What can you do to guarantee yourself the holidays you deserve?