

## Tips on how to handle stressful family/friend situations during the holidays!

Oh joy, the holidays are now upon us, and soon your home will be descended upon by a myriad of mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, Aunt Marys and Uncle Toms, the stepmother you never liked, and your most favorite, your in-laws. Yippee! So, how do you and your family survive the holidays without the SWAT team showing up at your door and somebody being read their Miranda rights?

1. Breathe and remember it'll be over soon.
2. Remember the buddy system. Have a confidant you can call or text or email. Now here's the thing about this buddy: Their job is NOT to agree with you, contribute more anger and upset or rile you up. Their job is to mellow you out. They should listen, show you love and compassion, and help you find that love and compassion for whomever you are having the issue with in the first place.
3. Before their arrival, take some time to honestly reflect on situation. Is it possible that you can find some responsibility for this family feud of your own? If you owe it, apologize. If you don't owe an apology, then don't apologize just to make things better. It never works out that way. Because usually when you're doing that, you're doing it to appease someone and that isn't showing compassion for you. And you'll probably end up bitter about it, which in turn will only make it worse. Being honest is always the best policy.
4. If you can, calmly and without emotion, contact them before they arrive to talk about it. Don't start the conversation with a "you" statement, start with an "I" statement. You could go with something like, "I would like to find a way to resolve (blank)... I value our relationship... Or when (blank) happened I felt..." Give them time to process this because most of us go on the defensive right off the bat so be patient and listen to their side as well. Your goal is resolution, not to be right.
5. If it's really bad and you see no resolution, here's a crazy idea: Say NO! There is no actual law that says you must spend any holiday with your family.

Source: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/betsy-chasse/holidays-family\\_b\\_4309802.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/betsy-chasse/holidays-family_b_4309802.html)

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**“This year my family decided to gather on Facebook for the holidays. Uncle Frank got into an argument with Grandpa. Aunt Gladys was offended by something she saw in Julie’s profile. Mom cried because Andrew posted a photo that made her look fat. I got so annoyed, I left to hang with my friends on MySpace .  
*It was an old fashioned Christmas after all!”***

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