

# 5 Habits for a Healthy Holiday Mindset



Most of us have high hopes for the holiday season. We all long to be connected with the people that we love. We plan special meals. We give presents that spark joy. But when things are extra busy, and you've got travels, shopping, parties, cooking, and family matters on your mind, you must be intentional about maintaining a healthy holiday mindset. Stress can derail your attitude and make this time of year feel less like a miracle and more like a nightmare. Setting aside time for yourself amid the rush to take care of your mental health is important.

## 1. Take Time to Reflect

Our brains need time to unwind and play in order to process events, feelings, and thoughts. Unfortunately, very few of us allow time to be still and cultivate reflection. You need time to be alone, turn off your devices, and just think.

- Meditate – There are so many health benefits to meditation. You can check out the post we've already written about how to start meditating.
- Journal – Journaling is a healthy habit that lets you connect with your inner world. You don't have to be a great writer or make a lot of sense to journal. Start writing a few lines or paragraphs about your day—the highs, the lows, the people you talked to, and the things you accomplished. You can also free-write, as quickly as possible, about any subject that comes to mind. Let loose on those emotions. There's nothing to be afraid of.
- Review your year – Look over your calendar or pictures and think about the past year. Note your wins and losses, the big moments of change and transition. Write it out on a simple timeline from January to December. Just reviewing all that happened this year will help you focus your thoughts on the things that matter.

## **2. Say Goodbye to Negative Self-Talk**

As you pay attention to your thoughts, you might notice some destructive patterns developing. You can leave negative self-talk behind in 2019 and start the New Year with a fresh mindset. Replace destructive and critical self-talk with positive affirmations. Let go of the drive to be perfect and perform all the time.

Our brains have a “negativity bias,” meaning we filter out the good and focus on the bad. We interpret events in a bad light, hang on to bad memories, and ruminate on hurtful things people have said or done. Since we tend toward negativity, we have to work intentionally to identify and get rid of the negative dialogue that’s happening in our heads.

## **3. Get Ready for the Difficult Moments**

The holidays bring their fair share of stress. One of the biggest headaches can come from spending time with family. You might have some serious tension or disagreements with family members. Instead of running away from those challenges, shift your mindset and see them as opportunities for growth. Recognize how you can grow as a person by speaking your mind and making progress to improve your relationships, instead of damaging them, by having honest conversations.

## **4. Give Thanks**

Thanksgiving doesn’t have to end when the turkey and the stuffing are gone. Carry the spirit of gratitude throughout Christmas and into the New Year. Practicing gratitude changes your mindset from one of fear to one of abundance. There are plenty of good things in our lives—we must be intentional about looking for them.

## **5. Spend Time With People Who Lift You Up**

Motivational speaker and personal development coach Jim Rohn famously said, “You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.” Be intentional about the people you see over the holidays. You don’t have to say yes to every party invitation. There’s no way you can keep up with it all. Focus on the people who bring positivity and encouragement and say no to the rest.