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Nov 22, 2021 by [Naomi Leight-Give'on](#)

Public Diplomacy Rules for the Holidays ^[1]

Note from the CPD Blog Manager: This post has been updated as of November 2021 with COVID-19-era recommendations.

While public diplomacy is most often used when tackling international affairs and politics, your Thanksgiving dinner table and holiday celebrations might feel like a diplomatic and public health crisis.

These new public diplomacy rules for surviving a second round of holidays during the COVID-19 pandemic should help.

1. *Worried that a full-scale war will break out at the dinner table if you discuss COVID-19 precautions and vaccination with your family?* Pre-empt the conversation by sharing with your family your household's COVID-19 precautions before committing to attending a gathering. Inform them that you respect whatever decision their households are making, but that your household is following certain guidelines and will or will not attend based on your comfort level. If you don't feel everyone that is set to be around the table is at the same level of precaution as your household, share that you'd be happy to join for a holiday toast via Zoom, and hope to be in person when you feel comfortable gathering again.

2. *You're gathering with your family that does not see eye-to-eye on the pandemic?* Whether it's vaccines or the governmental response, still LISTEN to your family and friends. They just want to share with you what they think is best. If it doesn't flout public health guidance, nod, and let them share.

3. *Stay away from sickly subjects.* If you or a loved one in your household has the sniffles, stay home or cancel your dinner. The turkey and stuffing are not worth a family health crisis.

4. *Be grateful and share facts.* Last Thanksgiving, there was no preventative measure to protect you or your loved ones from COVID-19. This year, all people in the U.S. over the age of 5 are eligible to be vaccinated for COVID-19. Share this information and facts with your family and friends. Listen to legitimate concerns, and become a trusted messenger for your vaccine-hesitant loved ones.

Stay safe this holiday season.

Read the original post:

8 Public Diplomacy Rules for Surviving the Holiday Season

1. *You are sick and tired of hearing the same story from your grandpa every year?* LISTEN to your family and friends, they just want to share with you what they think is best! Let everyone have a say. You might not agree with everything or anything, but let them have at it.

2. *Fighting with your mother because she says you are cooking every dish the wrong way?* RESPECT differing points of view. While they may be WRONG or drive you insane, they are entitled to them. So, show a little respect, it could go a long way.

3. *Need to negotiate your way out of an uncomfortable situation?* FIND COMMON GROUND. While you might not have much in common, you MUST be able to find something you share. Whether it's a memory, or a place, anything to demonstrate commonality.

4. *Experiencing awkward silence because...?* EXPAND on shared interests, try to find things to discuss that are directly related to the point you both have in common.

5. *Want to help cool down the tension?* Use SMART POWER. Figure out what incentives (the first piece of pie, or the honor of carving the turkey) will motivate certain family members to behave in a way that is conducive to a pleasant dinner.

6. *Arguing with your father-in-law because you're not singing that holiday song 'the right way'?*

EXCHANGE traditions. If you are hosting a meal, you might want it to go a certain way, but open up to your guests' traditions. Ask your guests to each share a tradition they have so that everyone feels welcome, and everyone is participating in a positive manner.

7. *Affordable Healthcare, Immigration, Global Warming, Abortion Rights, the Middle East...politics, religion...* Stay away from STICKY SUBJECTS. If you know that your guests have divergent view-points, steer conversations away from those topics. If one arises, kindly say to all of your guests that while you are open to having discussions of all shapes and sizes, that for the sake of comfort for all the guests, you'd like to stay away from that subject.

8. *Don't like that dry, bland turkey or cranberry sauce out of a can and want to be polite about it?* Be TRUTHFUL and TRANSPARENT. Let the cook know that while turkey is not your favorite, you love their pumpkin pie! And don't forget to share with your guests what they can expect out of the holiday at your home. If you are a guest, ask questions and offer help to your host. Whether host or guest, don't put up a facade for the holidays, be yourself, be thankful, and have fun.

GOOD LUCK & HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
