



# MAKING YOUR HOLIDAYS SAFER AND HAPPIER

Holiday parties and family gatherings can be difficult for survivors of child sexual abuse. You may be faced with the possibility of being reminded of (or even seeing) your perpetrator at these events, which makes triggers almost inevitable.

It can be helpful to have strategies and plans in place ahead of time to help you stay safe, balanced, and confident in your healing journey. If you have a party or gathering coming up, use this worksheet to plan your strategy and maximize your safety.

- 1.** It's important to identify who can help keep you grounded. Make a list of 2-3 trusted people you can call who will help you cope if you feel distressed.

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**2.** Whether you're at a holiday party, family reunion, or you're just feeling triggered, knowing what you need from your supporters can help both of you navigate this sensitive space. Below, circle 1-2 things you'd like your supporters to do if you reach out:

- Help fix the problem.
  - Just listen.
  - Reflect back what you're saying.
  - Provide affirmations and reassurances.
  - Lighten the mood.
  - Write in your own ideas \_\_\_\_\_
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**3.** Since the #MeToo movement exploded in 2017, many survivors have shared their stories, which has made conversations about sexual abuse much more common. As a result, you may be asked about your own experiences during parties or gatherings. If this happens, remember that you are in control of your story and you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to. Write a few practice responses you can give if you don't feel like sharing your story.

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**4.** Repeating positive affirmations is an excellent way to help maintain your peace of mind during a stressful season. Make a list of three affirmations you can repeat to yourself when you feel triggered. *Example: I am worthy of good things!*

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**5.** There is often both internal and external pressure to attend every holiday event or family gathering. Sometimes choosing **not** to attend is the best choice for your well-being. Write down a few practice responses you can give for declining an invitation.

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**6.** Self-care is vital to your healing journey. Make a list of three things you can do over the next few months to make your self-care a priority. *Example: I will take 30 minutes for myself every day to read an uplifting book.*

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