



# SURVIVING FAMILY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

## *Episode Transcript*

Hey, it's Rebecca. Welcome to Returning. A podcast to return to yourself and the wisdom within. I'm so glad you're here with me. Thanks for returning.

So today, we are delving into the complex and beautiful challenges that can sometimes emerge when we gather with extended family over the festive season. I know for our friends in the States who celebrate Thanksgiving, that is just around the corner. And the holiday season for many of us is fast approaching as well. And so I thought it was a good time for us to explore this joyous but also complex theme a little bit further. And I am offering five tips on how we can keep ourselves grounded and present with our families and loved ones at this special time of year. I love my family and I'm really excited to be with them and have a sunny Christmas all together in Australia. And I've also learned over the years that there are practices and tools that I can put into place to ensure that I bring the best version of myself into what is often a very stressful, busy, complex and potentially triggering time of year.

I think especially for those of us who are perhaps returning home, as in to the family home, even with kids in the mix or regardless of whether there are kids in the mix. And so, yeah, I'll be sharing five tips to support you in navigating this time if stuff comes up there for you. At the end of this episode, you'll also find a guided Soul Inquiry to support you at this time of year as well.

I know how precious your time is, so let's jump in and open Sacred Space together. In the center of your heart, imagine a beautiful flower and with your breath invited to open petal by petal, revealing a light in the middle. This light is your soul, your wise, intuitive self. Invite that to be fully present now and step forward now. And together taking a moment to acknowledge the custodians and keepers of the land where I am and where you are known and unknown. Beautiful. Let's begin.

So one of my most treasured spiritual teachers, the late Ram Dass, once said, if you think you're enlightened, go and spend a week with your family. So, yes, this is such a good quote and this is basically why I'm sharing my five top tips to surviving family this holiday season.

So tip number one, jumping straight in, is understanding everyone's needs. So, taking the time to ask and understand what your needs are, but also the needs of loved ones can be such a huge lynchpin to a peaceful and present time together. So first it requires that we get really clear on what our needs are. So, and so often, like, we don't actually ask ourselves this. So this really sounds very simple, but it can really, really shift things. So what is it that you are most seeking over the holiday period with your family or your loved ones? Is it quality time with people? Is it to catch up with loads of different friends or is it to have one on one time with your family? Do you want to create new traditions and experiences, or is it about doing those things that, you know, you might have a ritual that you do on Christmas Eve that you love or something you do in the middle of the day? Might be, I know my grandma used to make the Christmas pudding, but she's now passed, and so is there a tradition that you want to honor or shift up? And also, you know, with, as families grow and change as well, whether that's through loved ones passing like my grandma or new people joining the family constellation, it can make things a bit more complex. And so you might be called to honor traditions that you already have. And with new people involved like that might be complex and so really getting clear on what is it that makes a special holiday season or Thanksgiving or Christmas or Hanukkah or whatever it is for you. And perhaps you want to create your own traditions. And so, yeah, working out what your needs are, what would make it a really special sacred time for you and communicating that is a really, really powerful thing.

I know last year when I went back to Australia, gosh, we went, it was just right at the end, well it wasn't last year, it was the year before actually. Last year I literally had just given birth to my daughter. But the year before we were literally, like, the last ones to go through hotel quarantine in Australia. Oh my God. And, yeah, but it was worth it because the main reason I wanted to go back as well as introduce my son to family and all of that, but it really was to spend quality time with my nana, my nana Peg. I just really sensed that it was, I missed her so much. We had such a deep connection, but I could just sense that if I wanted Sunny to meet her, it was, like, I got to go now. And, yeah, and so that whole trip, my number one priority was spending quality time with her. And I was so grateful that I got so clear on that need of mine, because otherwise it would have just been like every single year where, you know it's such a busy time where you can just get swept up in everyone's motives and the kind of stress and the kind of, like, oh we got to do this, the big to do list and everyone else's needs that. Yeah, that was just had been, really, really clear on that one need of me made me feel like at the end of that trip, like, I really, really got what I needed. And, you know, other stuff, yeah, sure, it came up, but it helped me make decisions and prioritize my time.

So getting clear on that, like, do you want small, intimate, one on one time? Do you want to honor rituals from the past or create new rituals? Do you want to have, like, a big family gathering? Do you want to travel or do you want to just have quiet and be based at home? Maybe you want to spend your time with loved ones, like, visioning the year ahead. So just getting clear for yourself on

all these tiny details and communicating them beforehand to your family can really help avoid feelings of disappointment or resentment even.

And also asking your loved ones what their needs are as well ensures that everyone is on the same page. And you might find that they don't know what their needs are, but at least you've asked them. And so yeah, if there is, like, an expectation gap, you can then ask them again, like, well tell me what's important to you? And, you know, if that feels a little bit too hard or edgy for your family, another idea or helpful way is to invite everyone to do the Love Languages test. So I think that really helps. Like, particularly with, like, knowing what gifts to give people. Or, you know, what gifts to give people, whether it's like through quality time or your presence or acts of service. Yeah, so I'll include a link to do the Love Languages test as well. That can be really fun to share with your loved ones as well. So yeah, this information alone I think can offer a huge insight into what people need and expect from your time together.

Alright, so tip number two is keep up your self-care. Maintaining supportive daily routines and habits can be hard at the best of times in our busy lives, let alone when you're juggling the upheaval of traveling, staying with family, hosting family. But in my experience, it is definitely so, so important, maybe more important than ever, to keep your self-care or spiritual practices going. When you are going through these potentially triggering stressful periods with family, and they're extremely joyful too, but it can just be, especially if you're introverted, it can be a little bit overstimulating. So getting clear on what is going to ground you and nourish you is just such a really helpful tool for when you're navigating the holiday season.

So yeah, finding pockets of time to return to your practices or routines can be something that you can communicate. So for example, you might be like, I need 15 minutes of alone time each morning to do my morning practice. Say you've got kids and you could say to your mum or dad or sister or brother, hey can you look after the kids while I do my morning practice? Hey I'll do the same for you if you want to go get a coffee or whatever. I have learned this over the years because whenever I used to go home, I would, my daily practice was always, like, walking in nature on my own. But, and I've done that actually since I was a teenager on the beach where I grew up. And then since I've moved away, I'll do my walk elsewhere. But over the years, my parents have now started walking a similar walk every day. And then loads of people that I know as well. And so what I found was that every time I went back home, I would be, like, Yeah, we'll all go walking together, but I really crave that, kind of, alone time. And it meant I didn't meditate, like, well on that daily walk. I wasn't kind of, like, filling myself up in that way that I would normally. And then I'd get, like, extra crunchy and just, like, feeling like my wells not quite filled up. And yeah, a couple of years ago I ended up communicating that and being, like, yeah, in order to do my work, I need to have that time walking in nature because that's actually where I do my writing or whatever. And so yeah, and I think it'll probably shift up a little bit. Last time I went back home, I actually took the kids and with my husband we went for a walk each morning together. We'd get a coffee and so I started using

that walking practice as family bonding time and then did my daily practice, like, elsewhere. Or I'd go off when my husband was taking my son, they'd, like, build sandcastles or run around, like, wild animals. And then I'd go and do my meditation while they did that. So, yeah, communicating that was really, really helpful. But yeah, I'm going to tune in before I take that trip and work out what is my daily practice for this period and how can I communicate it with others.

And it's not just about carving out the time. I really encourage you to get really specific on what you're going to do with your time as well.

And we'll return after this short break.

I really encourage you to get really specific on what you're going to do with your time as well, because I know what it's like when we're in indecision. We can just, you know, be overwhelmed and just not follow through with it. So, yeah, what is it that you're going to do in that time? So maybe you're like, I'm going to do a ten minute meditation or I'm going to do this yoga video or I'm going to swim 20 laps or walk from this end of the beach to the other end of the beach. So get really, really clear on what it is that you need to fill up your well, get regulated and just have it to hand. And, yeah, allow it to be your non-negotiable time each day. Oh my gosh, this can really change everything. The year I did this for the first time, like, it really did change the trip that I had.

So tip number three is call in support. So knowing you have a few supportive friends, or just people in your life, holding space for you can make such a difference. Often we may stop ourselves reaching out to friends for support at this time because we're, like, everyone else is really busy with their own families and dealing with our own stuff. But having a couple of close friends in your time zone in particular who you know you can reach out to is just so, so helpful. So you may even have a bit of fun with it of, like, creating, like, a WhatsApp group for the holidays. So you can all check in and see how everyone's going. You can do voice notes or quick chats and sometimes having, like, a funny code word can be enough to call in the holding and support of a loving friend. I think using laughter and humor is something that really cuts through when we're triggered or we're feeling a bit emotional. Humor can really cut through it and can help you just feel supported as well. So, yeah, consider doing that. That's my third tip.

And then the fourth tip is loving limitations. I actually have an entire episode dedicated to this point, which is called It's Okay To Give Up On Healing A Relationship. But in a nutshell, what I'm really saying here with tip four is it's okay to give up on healing a relationship when the other person isn't willing or able to meet you there. So this might seem super obvious to some people, but it's been a really big aha moment for me as a healer, as someone who's, like, so dedicated to healing. It's what I've dedicated my life to and, you know, authenticity. I'm a four on the Enneagram. Four type, and so authenticity is so important to me. And so this has always been a difficult one for me to just, like, accept, I guess. With myself and with any relationships as well. Just be, like, you know,

particularly if you're a system disrupter or a circuit breaker, cycle breaker or a healer. Yeah, if you've tried to shift a cycle with someone or within a family system or within extended family and you feel like you can't quite be met in that way, it's just a reminder that you don't have to keep putting yourself in the fire. It can be such a gift to everyone involved to simply compassionately accept the limitations of that relationship at that moment. And, you know, you may decide to pick it back up after, but maybe you're just, like, you know, I'm going to put this aside. And if I get triggered or if I feel disappointed or, you know, unmet, then you can go to your supportive tools, whether it's the WhatsApp group or your self-care practice. Try and just be clear of, like, if there is a difficult relationship, like, are you really going to work on this holiday season? Or are you just going to, you know, just try and be as compassionate as possible?

I'm mindful that, you know, this could sound like spiritual bypassing but I assure you, it really, really isn't. Sometimes the most spiritual thing to do is to actually give up on trying to heal or change something or someone and just accept everyone where they are. I know it's not easy. It's definitely one of the big challenges to accept that you cannot change anyone but yourself. And if you're in a relationship dynamic, like, you can only do the work for yourself. You can't do it for them. So accepting the limitations of a relationship can be super painful, but it's through that acceptance that we free ourselves from the other, from the bind of trying to force things to be different or that disappointment. I know it can feel very real, but accepting when someone is simply not ready or able to meet you there is really, really a powerful thing, particularly at this time of year.

I've got another episode called The Mysterious Timing Of Healing, which you might like to check out if this point resonates with you. It's essentially referring to the fact that there are often cogs at work other than the work that you're doing that need to turn in order for that true healing to arrive. And so that's a, it's a super short episode, but it was a really, really big aha for me. So maybe you want to tune in to that.

And yeah, tip five is own your energetic space. So this is my final tip and it's all about your energy and what you need to keep your energy feeling good. So often when we return to the family home or to someone else's space, or even just a space that's different from yours. Maybe you're sharing space with other people, maybe it's just your direct family you're sharing space with. You're used to, like, having the kids at school and your husband at work or you at work, having your daily commute where you've got, like, time to yourself. Again, those shifts in routine can really affect that energetic space. So, yeah, being, facing the subtle energies and dynamics of the place that we're in really does affect us.

So for example, you might be back sleeping in your childhood bedroom, or staying in a guest room that used to belong to a sibling, or on the very lounge you used to sleep on as a kid. So yeah, just acknowledging and being aware of the energetic space can be really helpful. And so, for example, something you might do is, like, bring a space clearing spray or incense or a candle, just something

that's going to, like, shift up the energy in the room. And you might even, like, bring a couple of items like your Oracle Deck or a statue or something, a little candle to make an altar, and you can create this little altar maybe to the younger you. Like, if you've got a part of you that you're kind of, like, feeling like it might be a little bit triggered, you could create an altar to the younger you that might get triggered. Another thing that you could do is just, like, explaining your needs for that energetic space. So, you know, I'd like to stay in this bedroom or I don't want to stay here. I don't mind staying in this room, but can we remove this from the space? You might also be, like, you know, I just hate it how everyone just, like, barges in through my room. Could I get a lock on the door? Or maybe you could even bring a little door stopper where you just, like, wedge it into the other side of the door, just so, like, no one can actually barge in if there's no lock. So yet owning your energetic space and taking it into your own hands as well. Like, you don't necessarily have to like request. You can just, like, you know, bring that door stopper or whatever it is that will be able to create that energetic space for you. Maybe it's about, like, the time that everyone's going to meet in the morning. You might own that energetic space by saying, hey let's meet at 9 o'clock or whatever. So it's not, like, you know, people are up at six, like trying to energetically be, like, where are they? Why are they still sleeping in? So, yeah, whatever you need, own that energetic space.

So they are my five tips to surviving family this holiday season. I really hope that they support you and your loved ones too, and that you just have a beautiful time together. And hey, if you're feeling bold, you could just send them this episode to listen to. I'm sure that would get them talking. And yeah, if you've been sent this episode, hello. So glad that you are here with me as well. I hope you have a wonderful, wonderful holiday season. And yeah, you know, it's a complex time. And yeah, this is what it is to be in a family and to be in relationship. I always say that relationships are the number one way we grow and those challenging ones, oh my God, they help us grow the most. And so, yeah, let's just look at our loved ones as these amazing teachers that they are as well. And that if we can soften our hearts and maybe just not be on the defense so much, be open to creating a new story. Like, if you say the same thing about someone, whether it's your sibling, your parent, your daughter, your son, your auntie, your uncle, like people can change. And if you change the old stories, like, if you say, oh this person's always like this, or here we go again, blah, blah, blah. Try and shift that up because it's those old stories where we're playing the same song that we played when, you know, 30 years ago, we can create new stories together. So yeah, that's my challenge for all of us to be open, to being less defensive and creating new stories, new rituals, a new way forward for us all.

Okay, I want to know where you end up staying this holiday season as well. So take a picture and tag me on Instagram. I'm [rebeccacampbell author](#). And yeah, if you do any of the tips, let me know as well.

All right, have a wonderful holiday season. We are going to dive into our Soul Inquiry today. And so today's Soul Inquiry prompt is - what am I being called to do to take care of my needs this holiday

season? What am I being called to do to take care of my needs this holiday season? Maybe tag me on Insta with your response there too. And once you've got that, what's a little baby step you can do to take in that direction? Maybe it is a door stopper. So finally, let's share a deep breath together as we close this Sacred Space we've stepped into. I'm so grateful for you being here. If you'd like to keep returning to yourself and returning here with me, then hit subscribe. If you love this podcast, leaving a review or a five-star rating really helps others to find it too. You can find the show notes from today's episode over at [rebeccacampbell.me/podcast](https://rebeccacampbell.me/podcast). Thanks for returning.