

This is a reprint (with a few updates) of a **StayWell** that we've sent out for the last few years just before Thanksgiving. We always get a lot of appreciative feedback on it, so I thought we'd just make it an annual tradition. Enjoy! - Robin

## Bringing Your Best to Thanksgiving Gatherings

Thanksgiving gatherings can be full of wonderful moments spent with people we love. They can also present opportunities to spend time with people we may find somewhat challenging. Usually, we are with those more challenging folks because they are related or connected to the people we love – friends of friends, in-laws, etc. People often ask me for suggestions regarding how to handle potentially challenging holiday gathering moments. Here are some ideas and reminders. I hope you find a few that help you enjoy your gatherings more this year.

- ◆ Attend to your greetings. You set the tone for the whole experience in the first ten seconds of greeting people. Set a gracious tone.
- ◆ Remind yourself that people who may be challenging for you are important to the person you love. Honor your loved one by rising above any pettiness.
- ◆ Let others be who they are. Their behavior is not about you. Let go of any urges you may feel to change, criticize, or fix others.
- ◆ If you have children, be aware that you are teaching your kids important lessons about being kind, polite, and respectful. Model handling holiday gatherings with ease.
- ◆ Engage with kindness. Remember, people often need love the most when they deserve it the least.
- ◆ Find one thing you genuinely admire about anyone you find challenging.
- ◆ Use humor to lighten tense moments. (Make sure it is "clean" humor - that is, not at the expense of anybody else's feelings.)
- ◆ Maintain your perspective. It's just a party. You can do this.
- ◆ Remember your Q-TIP. (Quit Taking It Personally)
- ◆ Conflict requires two. Avoid it by not engaging in it.
- ◆ If you are having negative thoughts or feelings about somebody... Recognize it, and remember: *you* can change *your* experience by changing *your* thinking. *You* are in charge of *your* mind.
- ◆ Every situation needs someone to 'step-up.' Be that person. Appreciate yourself for taking the high road.
- ◆ Breathe, repeatedly... keep it slow, deep, and easy. Breathe in and out from your belly. Exhale fully. This deep breathing will significantly reduce your discomfort.
- ◆ And finally, just remember – if you are angry or judgmental, those emotions will impair your digestive system, which means that all those tasty calories will get stored as fat instead of energy. So focus on the positive... You'll be happier in the moment, and your body will be a lot happier in the long run.

*Happy Thanksgiving!*

*Robin*

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For more useful tips, check out Robin's book, *SHIFTING GEARS: A BRAIN-BASED APPROACH TO ENGAGING YOUR BEST SELF* ▪ [www.RobinRose.com](http://www.RobinRose.com) ▪  
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