



Holiday Eating

Holidays are an opportunity to consider your family's traditions and the meaning behind them. They are also an opportunity for you to redefine and to recreate traditions that best support your self-care and recovery work.

Spend a few minutes considering the following questions (or spend a few more minutes using a creative outlet to help. Write. Paint. Brainstorm. Gather pictures. Remember. Do what you do.)

- What are your family's traditions for the upcoming holidays?
- What are the messages around these holidays about food and bodies?
- How do your holidays impact the self-care work you are doing?

Talk to your supports (your team, your partner, your friend, your family) in advance and have a plan before the day arrives. What will the food, environment, people or other triggers be?

- What are the supportive factors?
- Role-play any tough, unavoidable conversations.
- Plan to keep your eating, drinking and activity patterns consistent.
- If there are special foods that you are able to safely enjoy, think of a way to incorporate these into your meal.
- Ask or plan for a non-food related activity. Ideas: Take a drive to see something beautiful. Watch favorite movie. Plan a craft.
- Have an exit strategy in case you need it.

Reconsider your participation in holidays that involve a change to your eating or drinking.

As a general rule, if you are underweight, medically unstable, actively using disordered eating behaviors, or unable to connect to the spiritual purpose of the holiday, then it is not safe for you to participate in traditions that involve fasting, delaying or removing food or drinks.

Give yourself permission to take an indefinite break from any or all holiday traditions, if that is in your best interest. You can revisit this again next year.