



# Holiday: Your Time is a Gift

November 2023

*Image Credit*

## It's Your Time Off

We spend an entire year saving time off.

And it is usually spent on activities and people that may be a priority for you now or in the future:

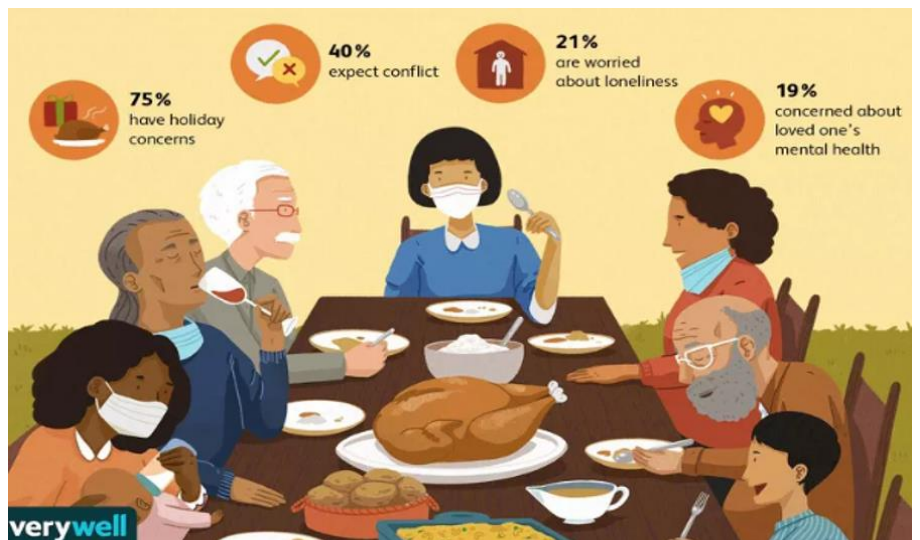
- Family gatherings
- Friends-givings
- After-hours work gatherings
- Holiday kids events
- And, the list goes on

We may even feel guilty.

**Solution: Plead not guilty!**

I've been pleading not guilty for years, to balance time with myself, family, and friends.

I simply [set boundaries](#) honoring myself and others with my gift of time.



*Image Credit*

## Setting Boundaries is Self-Care

Initially, I felt guilty enforcing holiday boundaries.

Over the years, other family and friends followed suit.

However, boundaries taught others how to treat me.

Setting boundaries helped me turn obligations back into invitations with no strings attached.



Image [Credit](#)

## Enforcing a Boundary with Family

**Me:** I got your invitation. Unfortunately, we can't make it this year.

**Aunt:** Why?

**Me:** I'm playing catch up with family life.

**Aunt:** You have many elderly relatives coming this year.

**Me:** I'll send you some family pictures and notes from the kids.

**Aunt:** What is more important than spending time with us?

**Me:** I love my extended family. And I need some downtime with Lisa and the kids.

**Aunt:** We'll miss you.

**Me:** We'll miss everyone too.

Remember, your initial boundary conversations will be uncomfortable.

And your self-care depends on how effectively you maintain your holiday boundaries.

## Conclusion

Planning holiday SELF-CARE is not SELFISH.

You deserve time off WITHIN your control.

I encourage you to set holiday expectations and boundaries because your health depends on it:

*The holiday season can be an exciting time, but it can also be incredibly stressful for many people—especially when we ignore or marginalize our self-care.*

*According to the American Psychological Association, 38% of people surveyed said their stress increased during the holiday season, which can lead to physical illness, depression, anxiety, and substance misuse.*

*The reasons given were lack of time, financial pressure, gift-giving, and family gatherings.*

Quote [Credit](#)

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## About the Author



[John St. John](#) is a Seasoned HR Project Manager currently writing and blogging on diverse topics.

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