

Thumbnail Image:



Nov 21, 2018 by Naomi Leight-Give'on

8 Public Diplomacy Rules for the Holidays ^[1]

While public diplomacy is most often used when tackling international affairs and politics, your Thanksgiving dinner table, Hannukah celebration, or Christmas tree lighting, might feel like an international crisis...

These 8 Public Diplomacy Rules for Surviving the Holiday Season should help!

1. *You are sick and tired of hearing the same story from your grandpa every year?* LISTEN to your family and friends, they just want to share with you what they think is best! Let everyone have a say. You might not agree with everything or anything, but let them have at it.
2. *Fighting with your mother because she says you are cooking every dish the wrong way?* RESPECT differing points of view. While they may be WRONG or drive you insane, they are entitled to them. So, show a little respect, it could go a long way.
3. *Need to negotiate your way out of an uncomfortable situation?* FIND COMMON GROUND. While you might not have much in common, you MUST be able to find something you share. Whether it's a memory, or a place, anything to demonstrate commonality.

4. *Experiencing awkward silence because...?* EXPAND on shared interests, try to find things to discuss that are directly related to the point you both have in common.

5. *Want to help cool down the tension?* Use SMART POWER. Figure out what incentives (the first piece of pie, or the honor of carving the turkey) will motivate certain family members to behave in a way that is conducive to a pleasant dinner.

6. *Arguing with your father-in-law because you're not singing that holiday song 'the right way'?* EXCHANGE traditions. If you are hosting a meal, you might want it to go a certain way, but open up to your guests' traditions. Ask your guests to each share a tradition they have so that everyone feels welcome, and everyone is participating in a positive manner.

7. *Affordable Healthcare, Immigration, Global Warming, Abortion Rights, the Middle East...politics, religion...* Stay away from STICKY SUBJECTS. If you know that your guests have divergent view-points, steer conversations away from those topics. If one arises, kindly say to all of your guests that while you are open to having discussions of all shapes and sizes, that for the sake of comfort for all the guests, you'd like to stay away from that subject.

8. *Don't like that dry, bland turkey or cranberry sauce out of a can and want to be polite about it?* Be TRUTHFUL and TRANSPARENT. Let the cook know that while turkey is not your favorite, you love their pumpkin pie! And don't forget to share with your guests what they can expect out of the holiday at your home. If you are a guest, ask questions and offer help to your host. Whether host or guest, don't put up a facade for the holidays, be yourself, be thankful, and have fun.

GOOD LUCK & HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
