

THE PEOPLE PLEASER'S GUIDE TO THE HOLIDAYS

BY KAITLYN VITTOZZI

My Sunday mornings are sacred. I work Monday-Saturday. Sundays are personal, quiet, and commitment-free. As a woman who is almost always scheduled, that unscheduled time is the rejuvenation I need.

Someone had reached out to see if I would want to go running on a Sunday morning- I thought about it, and politely declined saying that my Sunday mornings were my only unscheduled time. He persisted.

In that moment, this yoga teacher felt a wave of rage wash over her. How dare someone try to interrupt my down time?

As the rage subsided, I found myself sitting on the couch, trying to write up long texts, explaining myself. Second guessing myself – maybe I should go, maybe I should give up just this one Sunday, I wouldn't want anyone to think I was rude, unkind, or unaccommodating. I do need the exercise. The rabbit hole continued, if I say no he may even tell clients not to support me. I'll be broke and alone.

Does this spiral sound familiar at all? Guilt was what I was feeling. A feeling of not doing enough. And then the realization finally came to me. This is people pleasing behavior. I am a people pleaser and totally missed that I do this for the last how many decades of my life?

As I looked at my overbooked social calendar, I knew I had to make some shifts, to avoid running myself ragged into 2022. The holiday season is one

of my favorite times of the years – how can I help myself enjoy it? How can I put my needs first?

We all know many of us are too busy. Easily pulled into over-committing. To be realistic, if your people pleasing tendencies run deep – you really may need to do some deep inner work to get to the root of it. This article in no way replaces that. A therapist or life coach can help peel back some of those layers to really help you learn to love and support yourself, all twelve months of the year. Here are a few shifts I've made for myself over the years, I hope they work for you.

1. What do you want? This is the most important step. I see a lot of women, with all the scheduled self-care in the world, without a whole lot of joy in their lives. Set a sheet of paper or journal out on a table with a writing utensil. Before you even start to answer the question, move your body! Go for a walk, take a yoga class, kickbox, dance, something that makes you huff and puff a bit. Now, coming from a more embodied self, write down what you want for your holiday season. Calm? Connection? More laughter? Fun? You can journal as much as you like but try to whittle the essence of it down to a word or a sentence that can serve as a mantra for the next few months. When the tug of committing to something you don't want to creeps in, repeat your mantra to yourself. Example: Your why is "Peace at home." When you get asked to participate in the annual cookie exchange that really is more of a chore than fun, and you envision

yourself rearranging the whole day for it, running in after a few drinks it and needing to quickly feed everyone at home, maybe even getting short with your spouse- remember your mantra and politely say you can't make it. Alternatively, if you want to go but you're getting asked to man a carpool for someone else, do what you want!

2. When is your you time? Without time to take care of yourself you won't be able to accomplish the why. The saying no is the hardest part. Make some non-negotiable self-care time. Whether it's three minutes of meditation in the morning or ten minutes of a walk, don't let yourself get put at the bottom of your own to-do list. In the dark morning hours, sometimes I'll even just sip my coffee in the quiet and admire my own Christmas lights in the living room. If you have time and space carved out for yourself that you can feel happy and confident about, when someone asks you to show up to something else, you have a reason to say, "no thanks." I get it – sometimes it seems selfish or even flat out impossible to carve out some time for yourself, but once you get in a daily groove of it, it becomes a non-negotiable.

3. Drop the guilt. Some years our family goes out to dinner for Thanksgiving. Personally, I love the tradition. A full house can be wonderful for dinner, but a lot more work and we all usually end up eating ourselves sick because it's food.all. day. I have several friends, whose

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opinions I've never asked – but have replied “you're not supposed to go out to dinner for Thanksgiving!” If someone has limiting beliefs, it's not your problem. Don't let them get under your skin. You're on different paths. Let them work through their own supposed-to's on their time, not yours. Now go craft or sip a hot toddy. There's no need to replay the conversation in your head. Your time is too valuable. If you can't discharge that negative energy, try doing some

hard, fast exercise like a short sprint or jumping jacks.

“If we want to live a Wholehearted life, we have to become intentional about cultivating sleep and play, and about letting go of exhaustion as a status symbol and productivity as self-worth.” - Brené Brown

At the end of the day, saying no did not feel good. But it made me a healthier, happier, and more well-

rested version of myself. It prevented me from lashing out at any family members during Sunday dinner, and as my dog rested on my feet that Sunday morning, I knew this was exactly where I was supposed to be. It's not too late to change your life this year. Call Kaitlyn for a free phone consultation to see how you can use yoga therapy to become healthier and happier. (585) 200-7209 or TozziYoga.com for more information.

