

# Holiday Conversations Survival Guide



## 5 Practical Conversation Shifts

The holidays bring food, family... and sometimes heated conversations. This guide helps you avoid unnecessary conflict, reduce tension, and create conversations that build understanding, not division.

### 1. Shift from "Debate Mode" to "Dialogue Mode"

Most family conflict escalates because we slip into trying to win instead of understand.

- Instead of "That's not true," try, "That's interesting. Tell me more about how you see it."

### 2. Redirect to Shared Values

When things get tense, look for common ground.

- "Sounds like we both care about safety/community/family."
- "We might see it differently, but the value is the same."

### 3. Use Learning Questions, Not Leading Questions

Move from interrogation to curiosity. This interrupts confirmation bias, which is our habit of only noticing what supports our worldview.

- "What experiences shaped your perspective?"
- "How did you come to that conclusion?"

### 4. Stay Curious, Not Furious

When you feel heat rising, shift into curiosity mode. This expands your perception in meaningful ways.

- "What's the concern underneath that?"
- "How has this issue impacted you personally?"

### 5. Look for the Human, Not the Argument

Political views are shaped by history & heritage, identity & experiences, and current context. These are the same factors that shape all perception.

- Instead of reacting to the statement, try to connect with the story behind it.

## Holiday Conversation Rescue Plan

**Pause** - Don't react immediately

**Breathe** - Your nervous system determines your tone

**Clarify** - "Can you help me understand what you meant?"

**Redirect** - "Mind if we shift topics?"

**Reconnect** - "What's something good happening in your world?"