



HURRICANE HOLIDAYS SURVIVAL GUIDE

Return to family without returning to old emotional wounds (Wounded Child)

F. Dean & HollyKem Sunseri | Sunseri Roadmap™ | Transform U

Liberating People from Unhealthy Lifestyles to True Self Freedom

Welcome: You Can Go Home Without Going Backward

The holidays can bring joy, belonging, and cherished traditions. They can also stir up old roles (Protector), unresolved hurts (Wounded Child), grief, and pressure to make everything perfect.

The goal of this guide is not to create a perfect family gathering. It is to help you remain connected to your True Self, respond rather than react, and choose peace without abandoning your needs.

A core Transform U principle: You can return to family without returning to old emotional wounds (Wounded Child).

1. Check the Emotional Weather Before You Go

A hurricane rarely arrives without warning signs. Neither does an emotional storm. Notice what you are bringing into the room before you arrive.

Reflection: Which person, memory, comment, or expectation tends to activate me? What do I feel in my body when that happens? What old story (Wounded Child) do I begin telling myself?

My forecast: “When _____ happens, I tend to feel _____ and react by _____.”

My new response: “This year I will pause, remember _____, and choose _____.”

2. Release the Perfect-Holiday Fantasy

Emotional freedom (True Self) includes releasing unrealistic expectations and discovering peace and gratitude within imperfect circumstances.

You cannot guarantee everyone will be kind, sober, agreeable, or appreciative. You can decide how you will show up.

Try this: Replace “They must understand me” with “I can communicate clearly without controlling their response.” Replace “This day must be perfect” with “I can notice meaningful moments even when parts are difficult.”

Write one expectation to release: _____. Write one gratitude you can practice: _____.

3. Set Boundaries Without Building Walls

Healthy boundaries (True Self) are not about controlling other people’s choices. They are about taking responsibility for your own choices.

Before the gathering, decide how long you will stay, which topics you will decline, whether you need your own transportation, and what you will do if an interaction becomes unsafe or disrespectful.

Helpful phrases: “I’m not discussing that today.” “I care about you, and I’m going to take a break.” “We’re leaving at seven.” “I’m willing to talk when we can both be respectful.”

My boundary: “If _____ happens, I will _____.” A boundary is a plan for my behavior, not a demand that someone else change.

4. Prepare Your Heart: Forgiveness and Freedom

Before you attend the family holiday event, ask: Who do I need to forgive?

Forgiveness can be a process of releasing resentment (True Self) and the desire to retaliate. It does not require pretending harm never happened, restoring trust without evidence, or returning to an unsafe relationship. Reconciliation requires mutual participation and changed behavior.

Reflect: What wound (Wounded Child) am I carrying? What would it mean to release its control over my present choices? What boundaries remain necessary?

5. Use the PAUSE Plan When You Feel Triggered

P — Pause: Stop speaking for a moment. Breathe slowly and plant your feet.

A — Acknowledge: Name what is happening: “I feel hurt, embarrassed, or threatened.”

U — Understand: Ask, “Is this only about today, or is an older wound (Wounded Child) being touched?”

S — Select: Choose a response aligned with your values (True Self), not your first impulse (Protector).

E — Exit or Engage: Step away when needed; return to the conversation only if it is constructive.

Practice statement: “I need a few minutes. I want to respond thoughtfully.”

6. Speak So Connection Has a Chance

“A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.” — Proverbs 15:1 (KJV)

A gentle response (True Self) can de-escalate tension, while harsh words often intensify conflict. Gentleness is not passivity; it is strength under control. You can speak truthfully, maintain healthy boundaries, and still choose a calm, respectful tone.

Instead of “You always ruin everything,” try “When that comment was made, I felt hurt. I’d like us to speak respectfully.”

Instead of defending immediately, try “Help me understand what you mean.” Instead of winning the argument, ask “What outcome would bring more peace?”

Couples check-in: Before arriving, agree on a discreet signal that means “I need support” or “It’s time to take a break.”

7. Protect Your Recovery and Emotional Sobriety

For those in addiction recovery, holiday stress can reactivate familiar coping patterns (Protector). Physical sobriety matters; emotional sobriety includes learning to respond to the pain underneath unhealthy behaviors (Wounded Child).

Plan ahead: identify a trusted support person, keep helpful routines, bring your own transportation if possible, and choose an exit time. Avoid environments that threaten your recovery.

Ask yourself: “Am I trying to numb, escape, control, please, or punish (Protector)? What healthy need is underneath that urge?”

If you feel at risk of relapse, contact your sponsor, counselor, recovery group, or trusted support immediately.

8. Make Room for Grief, Loneliness, and Change

Not every holiday looks like the ones you remember. Some people are absent. Some relationships have changed. Some traditions no longer fit.

Give yourself permission to feel sadness without declaring the whole season a failure. Create one meaningful ritual: light a candle, share a memory, call a friend, volunteer, or start a new tradition.

Finish this sentence: “This year I want to honor _____ by _____.”

9. Your Holiday Survival Plan

Before: My three emotional triggers are _____, _____, and _____.

My support person is _____. My arrival and departure plan is _____.

During: My grounding phrase is _____. My boundary statement is _____. My PAUSE strategy is _____.

After: I will decompress by _____.

Remember: Progress is not never being triggered. Progress is recognizing the trigger sooner and choosing a healthier response (True Self).

10. A Seven-Day Heart Preparation

Day 1 — Notice: Identify one recurring family pattern (Protector).

Day 2 — Feel: Name the emotion beneath your usual reaction (Wounded Child).

Day 3 — Release: Let go of one unrealistic expectation.

Day 4 — Forgive: Take one safe step toward releasing resentment.

Day 5 — Boundaries: Rehearse one clear, respectful boundary.

Day 6 — Connect: Speak with your spouse, friend, or support person about your plan.

Day 7 — Choose: Write the kind of person you want to be (True Self) during the gathering.

A Faith Reflection for the Holidays

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” — Proverbs 15:1 (NIV)

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” — Romans 12:18 (NIV)

Consider Joseph’s story (Genesis 37–50): years of family betrayal did not have to dictate every future choice. Wisdom, truth, and the passage of time mattered.

Reflection: What is within my responsibility this season? What belongs to someone else? Where do I need grace and courage?

Your Next Step Toward True Self Freedom

Surviving the holidays is valuable. Healing the emotional wounds (Wounded Child) that keep repeating is even more powerful.

At Transform U, F. Dean and HollyKem Sunseri help individuals and couples recognize unhealthy emotional patterns (Protector), address underlying wounds (Wounded Child), and grow in emotional freedom (True Self) and healthier relationships.

Explore A Roadmap to the Soul, the Transformational Roadmap self-study course, and Transform U coaching and community resources.

Invitation: What would change in your relationships if you no longer had to react from old wounds (Wounded Child)? Take the next step in your Roadmap to the Soul.

Explore These Resources

1. Get Dean & HollyKem's Book A Roadmap to the Soul Today!

<https://amzn.to/478rNG8>

2. Watch Free Videos on the Sunseri Roadmap

<https://www.youtube.com/@IHaveAVoice1212>

3. Learn About Their Intensive Coaching Program, Transform U

<https://www.ihaveavoice.com/transform-u/>

4. Sign Up for the Next Free Webinar

<https://mailchi.mp/ihaveavoice/free-webinar-a-roadmap-to-the-soul-sign-up>

5. Learn More About Dean & HollyKem Sunseri

<https://www.ihaveavoice.com>