

SURVIVE AND THRIVE

Managing Life with Adult ADHD

Abigail's Podcast Cheatsheet

#015 Managing the Holidays

1. Holidays often involve advance planning, often not our strong suit. Start at the holiday in your calendar and work backwards to figure out what needs to be done when. Ask for help from a friend or family member if this is really challenging for you. I tend to find it helps to use a paper calendar instead of a digital one to see everything at once. It is easier to work backwards to see when things have to be done.
2. Holidays can often disrupt our systems, routines and habits that we have worked hard to achieve or are in the process of establishing. As much as possible stick with your systems, routines and habits even if you are on vacation. The less you stray from them the easier it will be to maintain and continue them after the holiday.
3. The holidays can also cause additional "To Do" items on our task list. For some it is better to create a separate task list for the particular holiday. Others find it is better to simply add to their regular task list. Either way is fine. If you are struggling to figure out when to do what tasks, talk it out with someone, it will help you to gain clarity. Also they may have some good suggestions.
4. During a holiday, we may end up having more social obligations. This can be intimidating for us. Remember that you never have to share anything you don't want to share. If a question is intrusive either simply answer vaguely or smile and say that is something you don't want to talk about and then ask a question. Basically all you need to do is deflect the attention from you.

On the next page are some conversation starters, conversation deflectors and ways of asking questions to move people to a different topic, a topic other than you.

Below are some conversation starters and deflectors to spark ideas for you to come up with your own. Not all will apply to you or work but are a good jumping off point. To get a conversation started it is best to ask open-ended questions. Those are questions where the person cannot just answer yes or no. "Do you like ice cream?" is not an open-ended question because the person can answer with a yes or a no. "What kind of ice cream do you like," is an open-ended question and helps start a conversation.

For other conversation starters just google "conversation starters" and then if it is particular situation add that to the search. Such as "conversation starters for..."

Conversation Starters:

As I'm new in the neighborhood, do you have any advice for me?

The Wilsons put out a wonderful spread. Have you tried the food yet?

The Wilsons have a lovely home, and they certainly throw a good party.

Hi! How are you? I'm Jane Sullivan. I'd like to introduce myself to those whom I don't know.

Have you been to the buffet? It's really good.

You look like you're also a new person in this group. I was glad to be invited so that I may meet some of my neighbors. (Or I was glad to be invited to meet some of the Wilsons' friends.)

I'm coming to introduce myself. I'm Jane Sullivan and I don't know many of the guests.

Have you lived here for a long time? I'm new and just meeting people.

Did you do anything special last weekend? What?

What do you have planned for this weekend?

What do you do? (follow-up) That's what you do for work. What do you do for pleasure?

(If around holiday time) What is your favorite holiday and why?

Are you doing anything special for the holidays? What?

Conversation Deflectors: (Make sure to smile when deflecting to keep it positive.)

Thanks for asking, but I would prefer not to talk about that. (Follow up with a question that get them talking about themselves or the event you are at.)

What do I do? Oh, I don't want to get to that, to boring, I'm on vacation today!

I have put a moratorium on talking about that for the day (or for this holiday.)