

Winter 2023



# The Parent Line



## Holiday Mindfulness

With the holiday rush, we often find ourselves becoming overwhelmed from multitasking and checking things off the to-do list. While trying to accomplish everything, we often lose our connection with the present moment – especially on our feelings and thoughts. We become so focused on the task that we often miss out on the little things that make this wintertime so special; the warm smile from your child, a compliment from a stranger, to watching the twinkling lights dazzle off rooftops. One effective way to cope with this holiday madness is taking the time to slow down and practice mindfulness.

To get more out of this busy season, try to enjoy the holidays with mindfulness. Mindfulness is finding a way to be aware, be open, and in the present moment – both internally and externally. Research has demonstrated that practicing mindfulness improves a person's well-being, relationship satisfaction, and attentional focus. In addition, mindful practices have shown to help reduce internal stress, anxiety, and even sadness.

Here are some tips to practice holiday mindfulness this season:

- Be present. Notice and become aware of the everyday things you can be grateful for. Instead of thinking about all the things you don't have, acknowledge what you do have. For example, "I am grateful for another day," "I am blessed with my family," or "I have food to enjoy."
- Utilize your active listening skills. During the holiday get-togethers, sometimes you may want to tune out – go on your phone, check social media, see where others traveled to, etc. However, try to be attentive and practice active listening with those around you. It may surprise you on what you may learn about others and how rewarding it is to just observe and listen.



- Be open to your emotions and the feelings of others. The holidays can bring up a variety of emotions, from feelings of comfort to discomfort. So be attentive and receptive to others, especially yourself. For some, the holidays can bring up uncomfortable feelings, especially when loved ones are not present. So, allow yourself to sit with how you are feeling and embrace those feelings without judgement. Also, it is okay to ask for help, don't hesitate to reach out to your family, friends, or mental health professionals for assistance.
- Communicate and meet your own needs. With a busy holiday season, remember to take care and be kind to yourself. Take the time to do the things you enjoy or relax so you can recharge. With the many holiday obligations, it sometimes becomes overwhelming and stressful, so be sure to balance it with your awareness of your own needs.

When we take the time to be mindful this holiday season, we can give ourselves the gift of understanding ourselves a little better and to fully experience the meaningful moments that often pass us by. Experiencing gratitude daily, can reduce our holiday stress and allow us to be more in touch with the little moments that make all the difference.

Source: 8 Mindfulness Tips During the Holidays | Psychology Today

If you have any questions regarding this topic or any other parenting topic, please contact The Parent Line at 808-526-1222 or 1-800-816-1222.

## Suggested Readings



**Tomorrow is New Year's Day**

By: Aram Kim

**Playing with Lanterns**

By: Yage Wang

**Snow Horses: A First Night Story**

By: Patricia MacLachlan

**Bright Winter Night**

By: Alli Brydon

List compiled by the staff of Edna Allyn Room for Children at the Hawai'i State Library. Mahalo!

## Special Days to Remember

### December

7 - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

25 - Christmas Day



### January

1 - New Years Day

15 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

### February

14 - Valentine's Day

19 - President's Day



**February is National Parent Leadership Month**

Nominate a Parent Leader by calling us at 808-526-1222

## Suggested Activity

Do you have a lot of leftover wrapping paper this holiday season? Well, here is a craft you can do with your child and upcycle that beautiful wrapping paper and make your own custom gratitude holiday ornaments.



### Supplies:

- Wrapping Paper, Ribbon, Hole Puncher, Scissors, Clear Packing Tape, and a Permanent Marker

### Instructions:

- Using a hole puncher, model to your child how to use it with the wrapping paper; then let them punch out some paper circles.
- Lay out the punched-out circles on a flat surface.
- Using a piece of tape, put the tape over the punched-out circles.
- Then, turn it over and cover it with another piece of tape.
- Next, cut it into any shape you would like for your ornament or trace a shape and let your child cut it out.
- Punch a hole at the top for the ribbon, so you can tie it to hang.
- With the permanent marker, let your child write their name and what they are grateful for. Have fun and happy holidays!

## Spotlight on Safety

### Holiday Safety

With this festive season starting, it's time to take out the decorations, put on the holiday playlist and get to decorating! It's the most wonderful time of the year – that is, until someone gets hurt. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the most common injuries during the holiday season are due to falls, lacerations, burns, and back strains. These types of injuries are preventable, so to ensure a safe and enjoyable season, here are some safety tips:

- Follow all safety and care instructions when installing all electrical décor. This includes the extensive outdoor displays to the twinkling lights on your tree.
- When lifting heavy objects, use a proper lifting technique to avoid straining your back.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended and keep them at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn.
- Dispose of holiday décor with visible damage such as broken ornaments or bare wires.
- When using a ladder to hang decorations, place the ladder on a firm, level ground and ask someone for help to stabilize the ladder by holding the bottom.
- Avoid using sharp objects when opening gifts. Remember, safety first!

Source: Safety Corner ([hawaiiipacifichealth.org](http://hawaiiipacifichealth.org))



## A Parent Asks...

**Q: What should I do when my 6-year-old daughter insists on getting a gift for herself when we are shopping for gifts for others during the holidays?**

**A:** Let her know that she is important, and right now we need to get gifts for others so request for her "help" in finding them. All children want to be included, so let her be involved by helping you find or make the gifts. Mindfully put thought into who you

are giving to, what you are giving, why you are giving it, and how it might make them feel and allow your daughter to be involved in this process as well. With the season of giving and exchanging gifts, whether it be a gift within your financial means or a homemade gift from the heart, include your daughter in the process. It will help her problem-solving skills and it can also make her think about others as she can form a deeper understanding about their needs and wants, rather than just her own.

## Hale O Ulu

Hale O Ulu works with the family unit by providing youth and adolescents with tutoring services, life skills training, finances, budgeting, employment preparation, and education. All while working with parents on parental goals, employment, education, and support around budgeting and finance. This program offers services to end the dependence of needy families on government benefits. HOU serves youth ages 6 to 23 and their families at no cost. For more information, please contact 808-509-7829 or email [kabuluyan@cfs-hawaii.org](mailto:kabuluyan@cfs-hawaii.org).



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A private nonprofit serving Hawai'i since 1899