

Cultivate holiday joy

By T. Lee Brown
Correspondent

Ready to have a joyful, meaningful holiday season? Jump into JOMO: the Joy of Missing Out. Detach from the constant news cycle. Don't worry about who's doing what on social media. The holidays are a great time to connect in real life with real people (*see related story, page 3*).

1. **Make a Decision**
Decide whether you really want more time, connection, and real-life joy. If the answer is yes, try a couple of the following methods. Keep in mind that you'll probably slip, and these attempts won't go perfectly. That's OK.
2. **Try a Screen-Free Zone**
Designate times and places where phones aren't used. Start with the dinner table; use a box or basket where people can deposit their phones. Consider adding in the living room, fireplace, kitchen, or wherever folks gather. If you normally keep a TV on in the background, banish it for special days like Christmas. Cover it with a pretty cloth. Even a simple yule log video can trigger addictive responses in people who are used to being on screens all day.
3. **Go for Games & Stories**
Have your family and friends lost the art of friendly chit-chat and storytelling?

- Bring in a game for a conversation starter. It can be a wacky board game, a round of cards, or a simple prompt. For example, go around the table and ask everyone to tell about the most creative, surprising, or embarrassing day they had in 2018.
4. **Set Up a Charging Station**
Find an out-of-the-way spot to charge your phone. Out of sight, out of mind. Add a power strip so that guests can park their phones at your station, too. Having to sneak into someone else's bedroom to get at a phone can make us more aware. Half the time, we don't really need the phone; we're just reaching for it out of habit.
5. **Handle Photos with Care**
Don't let the camera — which may be a phone, full of distractions — derail holiday activities. Decide ahead of time when you'll bring out the camera. Ask one person to shoot a few photos on one device. Then put the device away. If you feel the need to share photos with friends and family far away, take the device into a separate room. Set a timer on your phone for 10 minutes. Upload photos. When the timer goes off, log out of social media and email, and return to real life.
6. **Enjoy Your Senses**
Scrolling words and pictures are nice, but they don't engage your body and all

- your senses. Slow down and enjoy the pleasure of natural scents. Take a long whiff of a freshly cut wreath or Christmas tree. Savor the aroma of roasting veggies and bubbling pies. Go for a walk and listen to the winter birds and squirrels; hear your own soft footfalls in the snow. Pay attention to how ingredients feel in your hands while cooking holiday treats. Take a hot bath with no videos or podcasts to distract your attention. Engaging your senses is good for your brain and body, and reduces stress.
7. **Change Your Bedtime Routine**
Screens mess with our sleep. One hour before bedtime, turn off all screens. Unplug your cable modem and/or wifi router from the wall. (If you have kids or device addicts in the house, unplug both ends of the cable modem cord, then hide it. Some local families lock their cords in a safe at night.) Plug in your phone far away from your bed. It's best to turn the phone off entirely and use a separate alarm clock.
8. **Rediscover Ink & Paper**
Does your phone contain all your lists and calendars?

- Adding milk to a shopping list or scheduling a doctor's appointment can turn into 45 minutes on Instagram. Frequent smartphone use causes most of us to become more fragmented thinkers. As a result, we constantly pick up our phones to send reminders or take notes.
- Instead, keep pens, paper, and little notebooks at the ready: in each room of your house, back pocket, car, backpack, purse. When a thought comes up, jot down a physical note. Later you can collect them and decide which ones are worth following up on. Revert to old-fashioned paper calendars for everyday scheduling—Moleskine makes lovely, pocket-sized appointment books. Hang a pen and paper on your fridge for the grocery list. It worked back before smartphones existed; it'll still work today.
9. **Have a Beautiful Holiday**
How did your JOMO holiday go? Got a good tip for managing screen time? Was the whole thing a failure? We want to hear your story. Send it to freelance writer, tiffany@plazm.com.

Holiday services set

Sisters-area churches are preparing holiday services. In addition to those listed in a previous story in *The Nugget*, (*December 12, page 18*), the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration will hold Christmas Eve observances on Monday, December 24. There will be a family service with Holy Eucharist and a children's living Nativity at 4 p.m. and a traditional service with Holy Eucharist at 9 p.m. The church is located at 68825 Brooks Camp Rd.

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church will hold a traditional candlelight service with Christmas hymns at 9 p.m. at 386 N. Fir St.

All are welcome to the Chapel in the Pines Christmas Eve service on December 24 at the Camp Sherman Community Hall on FS Road 1419.

The December 12 story listed an incorrect address for Sisters Church of the Nazarene. The correct address is 67130 Harrington Loop Rd.

For a complete listing see page 12.

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