

4 Things to Consider When Choosing Who to Spend Your Holidays With

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The holidays are undoubtedly a time when you want to spend as many hours as possible doing memorable things with those you love most.

Growing up, you likely became accustomed to the holidays being all about family. However, as times changed, you also developed many relationships with friends that you are very close to.

On one hand, you're pulled towards observing the tradition of being with your family. On the other hand, you feel the desire to share the holidays with those other special people in your life.

So how do you choose?

Consider these aspects when trying to decide who to spend your holidays with:

1. Meaning of the season. In order to decide who to spend your holidays with, it's important to first consider the meaning of the season to you. Is it about sharing gifts and time with loved ones? Or is it about going out and having a blast with an exciting holiday vacation?

- *One thing's for sure: it's about the memories, so you would need to determine which set of memories you would treasure most.*

2. Splitting the time. It also makes sense to consider whether splitting the time during the holidays between family and friends is doable. For example, you could spend the days leading up to Christmas with friends, then the actual Christmas Day with family.

3. Alternating years. *A good option that would allow you to avoid choosing between*

family and friends is to alternate years between both groups. One year, make the commitment to dedicate the season to family. Let them know that the following year you'll spend the holiday with friends. Tell your friends about your plans as well so no one feels left out.

4. **Mixing family and friends.** Can your holiday events be arranged to include both family and friends? For example, instead of planning with your friends to go hiking in the Grand Canyon or bungee jumping off Niagara Falls, you could choose camping at a location that might even appeal to members of your family.

- Make suggestions for other activities and events that a wider cross-section of loved ones can be a part of.
- ***Get the best of both worlds:*** suggest to your family that you all spend the holidays together away from home. Perhaps you can start a new tradition with both your friends and family to share a vacation rental somewhere for a week at Christmas. You can all create new memories for everybody to hold dear for years to come.
- Invite your friends to Christmas dinner at your family home, if possible, or host Christmas dinner for your friends and family together. If feeding everyone at once is stressful, host a Christmas Open House and serve the food buffet style. ***Friends and family can pop in throughout the day, leaving you more time to visit with each one.***

You don't necessarily have to spend the holidays with only one set of special people. With careful consideration and planning, you can split your time amongst all the people who matter most so you're a part of everybody's holiday memories – and they're all a part of yours!