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MY SO-CALLED SEX LIFE

DECEMBER 21, 2010 AT 1:17:00 **0 COMMENTS**

4 Ways To Avoid Insulting Your Spouse's Family This Christmas

BY ANDREA FRAZER

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In my last post I mentioned that Rex and I have a game plan for getting through an impending large Christmas Eve family gathering graciously. It is so simple that anyone can try it. You simply need to:

1. Cancel on your family last minute.
2. Instead of paying your rent, book a flight to some remote island instead. The kids? Leave them with a neighbor. They'll be fine. They can swim now and don't need their meat cut up for them.
3. Return not a day sooner than January 2nd in a post holiday fog replete with awesome tan and ten pounds margarita weight.

Okay. Not that. The real way to avoid insulting your spouse's family? Don't invite them over!

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Wait... not that either.

The real way to keep everything running smooth and easy is to have a game plan. Ours is to laugh! And to eat! And we will take [Ms. Mindbody Kate Hanley's](#) advice on dealing with difficult personality members.

1. Stand by your mantra. "Before you head to the gathering, decide which family quirks you're dreading the most. Then resolve to repeat a calming mantra whenever your stress trigger happens. Your mantra can be any word or short phrase that's meaningful to you. It could be something formal, like 'Om' or 'Amen,' or something simple such 'peace' or 'bless his heart.' Whatever mantra you choose, taking a few moments to repeat it before you react to whatever is pushing your buttons gives you a chance to collect your thoughts-making you less likely to over-react."

2. Accentuate the positive. "Before you leave for the gathering (or before you begin getting ready, if you're hosting), take a few moments to name the parts of the day you're looking forward to-such as eating your Mom's apple pie, seeing your favorite cousin, or playing with your niece. Then if anything happens to spike your stress levels, make it a point to focus on the things you like. Changing your focus from something upsetting to something enjoyable can snap you out of a downward spiral in mood."

3. Practice the art of letting go. "We all wish we could 'get more Zen' around our families, but we can all use a little help because the emotions associated with family are deep-seated and highly charged. There is an acupressure point known as Letting Go that facilitates the release of troublesome emotions, deepens breathing, and promotes relaxation. Spending a few minutes applying gentle pressure to your Letting Go points can provide a noticeable shift in your mood. You can do it in your car before you go inside or even in the bathroom if you need help during the festivities. To find the Letting Go points, feel the tips of your collarbones on either side of the notch of your throat. Walk your fingers out to where the collarbones end-the Letting Go points are located three finger widths below that end point. With your arms crossed in front of your torso, press two or three fingertips in to the points on either side of your chest and breathe naturally as you do. You don't need to go for the burn-think steady but gentle pressure. After a minute or two, remove your fingertips slowly and take a couple of breaths before you head back in to the festivities."

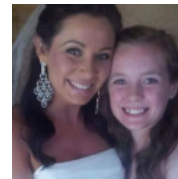
4. Remember your heart. "Whenever you need help staying calm, take a moment to lay one hand over your heart. This simple gesture shifts your focus away from your swirling thoughts and on to your body-where your deepest wisdom resides--and your heart in particular, which helps you react with love instead of frustration. If anyone in your family catches you doing it and looks at you funny, just tell them you have heartburn."

More about *The Anywhere, Anytime Chill Guide*

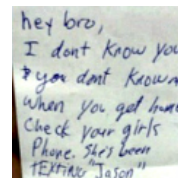
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What about you? Do you think these tips can work? Would love to hear your feedback!

* This is our holiday photo. Look how happy we all look! Do you think we can maintain in the very real world of family gatherings and crazy conversations? Let's hope so! And I hope you can, too. I know you can, in fact. Life is too short to not focus on the positive. Yes - this even includes the crazy inlaws.



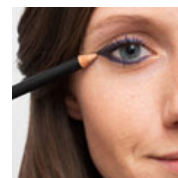
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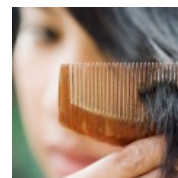
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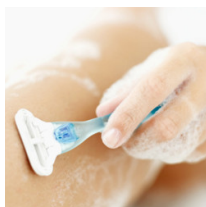
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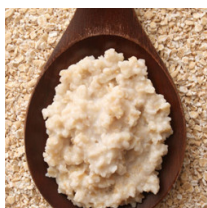
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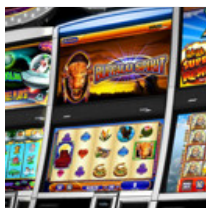
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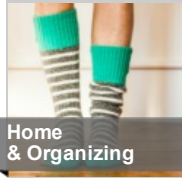
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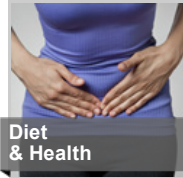
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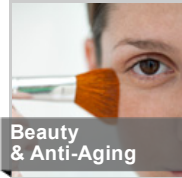
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