



HEALING THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS

10 Supportive Tips for Managing Mother and Father Wounds This Season

1. NAME WHAT THE HOLIDAY BRINGS UP

Naming it reduces the shame around it.

The holidays can amplify old wounds:

“Everyone else has a close family except me.”
“I feel obligated to be around people who hurt me.”
“I’m supposed to feel ‘merry,’ but I just feel tense or sad.”

Put words to your patterns:

Do you get anxious? Go numb? Over-function? Feel guilt or pressure?

2. SET BOUNDARIES BEFORE THE HOLIDAY ARRIVES

Boundaries aren’t punishments—they’re protection.

If your mother/father wounds involve:

Criticism, manipulation, guilt-tripping, emotional volatility, or simply draining dynamics

Then it's okay to decide:

- How long you'll stay
- Where you'll stay
- What conversations you won't engage in
- Who you need as a support person

3. GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION NOT TO PERFORM

You can show up as you are, not as the version your parent prefers.

Many adults with parent wounds become:
the peacekeeper, the helper, the achiever, or the emotional sponge.

You do not have to:

- Pretend everything is okay
- Play a role that drains you
- Entertain or appease anyone

4. CREATE A “HOLIDAY ANCHOR PLAN”

You can show up as you are, not as the version your parent prefers.

Before the day arrives, decide:

- Who can you call/text for grounding?
- What's your exit plan if you get overwhelmed?
- What coping strategies help you reset (walk, music, breathing, journaling)?
- What's one thing you can do on Christmas that feels nourishing rather than obligatory?

5. GRIEVE THE PARENT YOU DIDN'T HAVE

Grief doesn't mean blame. It means you're finally tending to the child who didn't get tended to.

Holidays highlight the fantasy of the “perfect mom” or “perfect dad.”

Let yourself acknowledge:

- what you needed
- what you didn't get
- how it shaped you

A quiet ritual can help:

- sit in silence
- rehearse a comforting scripture or quote
- light a candle
- write a letter you won't send
- journal: “The child in me needed...”
- release expectations for a different ending





6. REDEFINE FAMILY FOR YOURSELF

Your story isn't stuck in your original family blueprint.

If your family of origin is painful, you can intentionally build:

- chosen family
- supportive friends
- mentors
- communities that truly see you

You can create new holiday traditions:

- a breakfast with friends
- volunteering
- a nature walk
- a cozy day alone with books and blankets

7. LIMIT CONTACT IF NEEDED—EVEN DURING HOLIDAYS SEASONS

Your peace matters 12 months a year—not just some months.

You are allowed to:

- skip the gathering
- visit briefly
- send a message instead
- go low/no contact if the dynamic is harmful

The holidays is not an obligation to be re-wounded.

8. SEEK THE ADULT PERSPECTIVE, NOT THE WOUNDED CHILD'S

This can shift the whole emotional landscape.

When you feel yourself slipping into the old child role:

Shame, fear, anger, and people-pleasing.

Pause and breathe into your adult self:

“I am not powerless. I’m allowed to make adult choices now.”

9. PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

You’re not behind. You’re healing.

Self-soothing phrases for the holiday:

- “It’s okay to feel how I feel.”
- “It makes sense that the holidays stir things up.”
- “I am allowed to have boundaries.”
- “I am building a healthier future.”

10. REBUILD WHAT YOUR PARENTS COULDN'T GIVE YOU

You’re becoming the parent you didn’t have.

Every time you:

- regulate your emotions
- speak kindly to yourself
- choose safe people
- rest
- set boundaries
- show self-respect

...you’re reparenting yourself.

