



Holiday Tips: How You Can Help Make the Holidays Happy and Healthy for Your Elderly Loved Ones

1. Find ways to engage older adults in the holidays by asking pointed questions. **Ask about past experiences and childhood memories.**
2. Reminisce about your memories with the older adults and **bring them into the newer traditions.**
3. **Pull out old photos and videos.** The holidays are a time of nostalgia; don't shy away from the memories.
4. **Be conscious of hearing loss.** In a large room or with many people it will echo and make it hard for those with hearing loss to be a part of the holiday events. Create smaller group settings. Speak slower and be clear in your pronunciation.

The Food Factor

1. **Include your older adult in the meal planning.** Ask them to bring a dish if they can. If not, ask them for a favorite family recipe and incorporate it. Ask them to help in the kitchen or just sit there to keep you company while you work.
2. **The holidays are not a time to hold tight to dietary restrictions.** Use them as a guide, but allow for the enjoyment of the meal. Food elicits so many memories and joy.
3. **Use spices and flavors that are culturally familiar.** The taste of something from "home" will add so much to the holidays.



Bonus Tips!

1. **Music is an excellent way to engage older adults.** Their favorite songs can elicit fond memories of their past (high school prom, wedding day, birthday, etc.). That, in turn, will likely lead to further discussions.
2. Sit with your older adults and **start documenting their favorite recipes.** It's therapeutic to everyone involved.
3. **Olfactory games.** This should include everyone. Top Scent is a game that comes to mind: it comes with various scents to identify. This is a great intergenerational game!
4. **TIME OUT.** With older adults being included in activities, they may get tired and need a break. A quiet area should be designated where they can take off their shoes, listen to serene sounds and recharge.

happy
holidays!