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916.447.5264 ♦ 800.499.8411  
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## **Holiday Conflict: Prepare to Prevent**

**by Jackie Boor**

*Custom strategies and  
programs to support how  
we live, work and interact*

For all the joy and wonder the Holiday Season can deliver, there is often such an undercurrent of tension and stress that even the most compatible circle of family and friends can find themselves in conflict. Issues, much like the nature of human interaction in general, have no limits: Who gets invited to Thanksgiving dinner? How will divorced parents share their children? What can be done about a certain someone and excessive drinking?

Amid the sacredness of the season, we can find ourselves at odds over who gets what, who comes when, who sits where and, always on the radar, which stuffing recipe is best.

Here are a few tips for reducing the potential for conflict during the holiday season:

- Learn from history: Think back to other holiday gatherings where there may have been unexpected hurt feelings or a sudden tantrum. Pay attention to what contributed to that development and strive to alter that formula to prevent a repeat.
- Check your assumptions: The way you have always done it, may not be the current desire of others. Be open to options. Perhaps in lieu of gifts, each person donates to a preferred charity or the head family cook passes the crown with some seasoned sideline coaching.
- A time and a place: Unresolved disputes, such as a mishandled inheritance or a rebellious teen, may very well need attention. Raised during a celebratory time may exacerbate the problem. Postpone “the talk” for later.
- Focus on the positive: Keep in mind the noble intentions of the Holiday Season. Gifts of love, compassion, and forgiveness can deemphasize materialistic forces and unrealistic expectations. Be flexible and remember the only behavior we can truly control is our own.

While preventing conflict during the holidays is an advisable objective, there remain many avenues for addressing underlying issues the rest of the year. *Lang & Associates* can help with those difficult conversations in the New Year.

**Best wishes for peace and joy in your holidays!**