

## IS IT POSSIBLE TO SAFELY HOST HOLIDAY GATHERINGS DURING COVID-19?

Written by our partner, [MeMD](#)

Should you host family and friends in your home this year or limit your festivities entirely to digital interactions? Unfortunately, there's no easy answer that works for every household. Let's take a closer look at the risks and potential precautions to consider.



### Number of households and guests involved

The CDC recommends limiting your gatherings to a small guest list. In addition to the number of guests you invite, you should also think about the number of households involved. Generally, a gathering of 10 people from 2 different households will pose a lower risk than a gathering of 10 people from 5 different households. Each household brings a different contact history and set of safety criteria they normally follow. The more households involved, the higher the risk.

### Pre-gathering precautions

Ideally, every guest you invite should be on the same page with COVID-19 precautions. That means practicing social distancing, mask-wearing, handwashing, and other smart prevention behaviors. You may also consider asking all guests to get a COVID test prior to your event but remember that testing provides no guarantees. Along with the possibility of a false negative, you should also consider the risk of any contact made between the date of the test and your gathering.

“

Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance

- Eckhart Tolle

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### December's Book Recommendation

#### *Pillow Thoughts*

By Courtney Peppernell

*Pillow Thoughts is a collection of poetry and prose about heartbreak, love, and raw emotions. It is divided into sections to read when you feel you need them most.*

*Review: "A must! So beautifully written. I felt every word! [...] I also really like how the book is separated by section. I know whenever I need some advice, I know exactly where to turn."*

## Gathering environment

If possible, host your event outdoors. Being indoors—especially when you cannot maintain a safe distance of 6 feet from guests—will greatly increase the risk of the gathering. If eating together outdoors isn't possible, consider inviting your guests to pick up a plate to-go with a short visit to your home.

## Can you safely travel this holiday season?

While it may be tempting to go home and see parents, siblings, and other family members, travel is one of the higher-risk activities you can participate in this holiday season. Whether that means inviting out of state visitors to stay with you or going to visit them, it's best to avoid any major travel arrangements. If you do leave your community, go by car to avoid large crowds in public transit facilities like airports and train stations.

## What are some good ground rules for safe holiday gatherings?

- Host the event outside or keep windows open inside to improve ventilation indoors.
- Wear masks when not eating or drinking. Remain 6 feet apart when masks are not worn.
- Ask guests to wash their hands upon arrival. Skip hugs and close greetings.
- Use disposable plates and cutlery.
- Disinfect common spaces before and after the event.
- Discourage guests from interacting with household pets, or keep pets enclosed in a bedroom, kennel, or crate.
- Ask guests to limit contact outside their homes for 14 days prior to the event.
- Avoid buffet-style serving for meals.
- Provide guests with ground rules and expectations before the event—don't wait until guests arrive to have important conversations about everyone's health and safety.

## When is it time to change your plans?

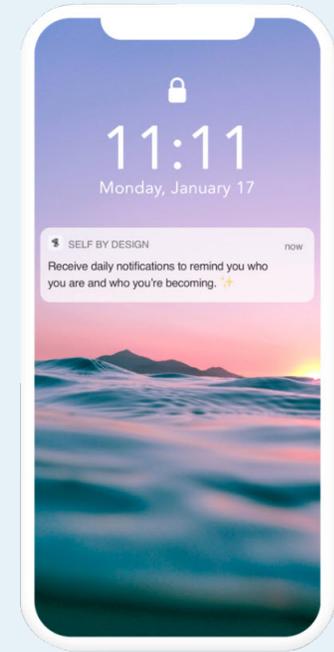
Regardless of your specific plans, it's essential to remain adaptable. If plans involve traveling between two separate communities, be ready to call things off if infection rates rise above 5% in either area. Alternatively, if you or anyone on your guest list starts to feel sick, interacts with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or tests positive themselves, you should cancel plans immediately.

**For more information or advice, contact eni online at:**

**[www.eniweb.com](http://www.eniweb.com)**

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Integrated into the **NexGenEAP Mobile App**



Integrated into our **NexGenEAP** mobile app, **[Self By Design](#)** is a mindset app created to support you in becoming the best version of yourself. Rooted in neuroscience and psychology, this app was designed to keep you inspired and motivated to work towards your wellness goals with curated collections of inspirational quotes, affirmations, and the ability to create your own powerful visual reminders to keep you on track.