

Holiday is a great time to focus back on the year and how much your family has grown. It is a wonderful time to see all of your family that you haven't seen in quite some time. I like the holidays for so many reasons.

I Like the Holidays

The word holiday has related but different meanings in English. It was originally a combination of the words holy and day. These days originally represented special religious days. The word holiday has changed to mean any special day of rest, not counting weekends.

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The problem of course is that we don't rest on the Holidays. We spend considerable time looking for gifts or preparing for vacation. Unfortunately, when we went to school they emphasized the Three "R's"; namely Reading, Rwriting and 'Rithmetic. All that training to be diligent and to work hard started us thinking that we should be busy working hard all the time. Now they know better and in schools they emphasize the Four "R's"; namely Reading, 'Rwriting', 'Rithmetic' and my personal favorite 'Recess'.

Educators now describes the ability to play as one of four signs of a child's health and well-being, the other three are eating, sleeping, and toileting. At the same time parents, teachers, and health professionals report a steady decline in children's ability to play. This appears to be the gift that we were taught in school that we are passing along to our children. Psychologists say that 95% of children are creative. They also say that only 4% of adults are creative. Solving our day to day problems in a creative manner is absolutely critical in today's high-tech, complex society. This is why time off is so important.

This is also where Holidays become essential. These special days recharge our batteries and let our minds roam freely to grasp solutions to the problems in our



While it's true that everybody loves the holidays, it's even more true that nobody really enjoys the holidays as much as Americans. Considering how hard we all work, the holidays is a great time to kick back and relax.

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everyday lives. In the English-speaking world a holiday can actually mean a vacation or period spent away from home or business in travel or recreation. A holiday can

also be a day set aside for celebration or a special day on which school and/or offices are closed, such as Labor Day. These holidays or 'Days Off' as we call them, are really important to our mental and physical wellbeing. The term 'Playwork' has been termed to describe the encouragement and risk assessment to give people on holidays the ability to play within the bounds of safety. This can include a relaxing walk in a park, a visit to a zoo, a museum, a musical event and other venues.

Sometimes just the gift of time off is all we need to rejuvenate or re-create ourselves. On other occasions we wish to not only re-create ourselves but entertain ourselves at the same time. On these special occasions, we want to participate in a celebration of the holiday. Some examples that come to mind would be Christmas and Easter. For some people who want more, they may make up a celebration of the holiday, (day off or not) like Halloween or summer solstice, or the start of vacation.

A favor or gift that you can give someone would be doing some 'Playwork' planning for them. You could suggest and plan a celebration or party in anticipation of an upcoming holiday. You may wish to make this an annual event so that the anticipation for your event can build from year to year.

Some examples might be : Queen Victoria Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Martin Luther King Day, Valentine's Day, Mardi Gras, Purim, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Shavuot, Independence Day, Rosh Hashanah,

Yom Kippur, Ramadan, Halloween, Los Dias de los Muertos" (Days of the Dead), Thanksgiving Day, Chanukah, Christmas, and finally Kwanzaa.

Just pick any one day and create a special event or celebration to occur on that day. Gifts could be exchanged and special foods could be prepared or purchased to add a new feature to your unique celebration.

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