



Ho, Ho, Holiday Hell....

A holiday survival guide

The holidays are upon us and no matter which you celebrate, or not, it seems to be the season of our discontent. I'm guessing you aren't fretting about an argument over which is tastier, white turkey meat or dark (even though that might be the best thing to argue over).

There are so many things that make the holidays stressful. Perhaps it is the food. Perhaps it is the drunk uncle. Perhaps it is the in-laws. Perhaps it is a pet. Perhaps it is children. I am also guessing it has something to do with unwelcome and uncomfortable conversations. For some, family and friends have been "disowned" or blocked. Yet you may have to engage with them, right?

Use this primer to navigate the disinformation gravy boat with ease.

Set Boundaries

In polite company, you know to steer clear of certain topics yet family gatherings aren't always considered "polite company." Be sure to set boundaries. Discuss ahead of time - or when you arrive - what topics are off limits. When someone discussed that topic, remind them of the agreement and change the subject.

Walk Away

If you know that you aren't going to get anywhere with the argument, don't engage. That doesn't mean ignore them. Politely move away from the conversation. Go into a different room or take a walk outside. If it gets really bad and other tips haven't work, leave. There is no need to cause yourself undue stress.

Find Common Ground

"You can pick your friends but you cannot pick your family" is certainly a true statement. That said, I bet you are reading this because you actually love your family (and your friends). You may not love all the things about them but they probably don't love all the things about you either. Mutual feelings. That said, what else is mutual? There must be some common ground. Find it.

Do....

- Set Boundaries before the gathering.
- Listen (and hear) when people are talking.
- Apply positive self-talk (don't be negative).
- Ask probing, but positive, questions like "I hadn't heard that. Where did you find that information?"
- Reassure the speaker by saying something like "I know that it's difficult to tell what is true or not especially on social media, but I've found that"
- Check your own ego (what if you're wrong).

Don't...

- Call anyone "stupid."
- Start yelling and screaming or starting a food fight.
- Don't banish the offender to the kids' table.
- Ignore the speaker.
- Threaten to cut yourself off from everyone.
- Get so stressed out that it impacts you.
- Assume you are correct.
- Be afraid to protect yourself. Walk away or leave if necessary.

Above all: Care before you share



Conspiracy Theories

The “lamestream” media won’t cover this so let that sink in and do your own research to make this go viral because there are no coincidences.

What do you do when someone at the holiday gathering jumps into a conspiracy theory cesspool?

Choose Your Battles - Part I

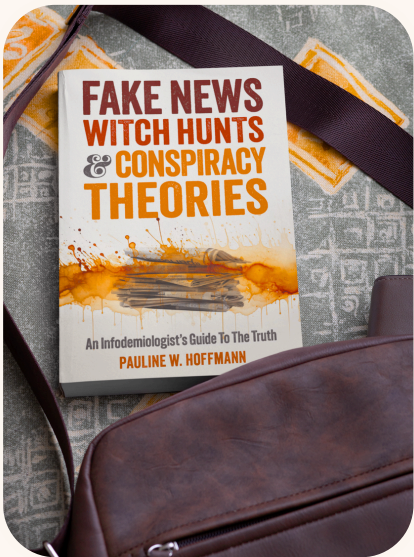
Your uncle has decided to tell you that he's been abducted by aliens and he's just waiting for the mother ship to return to beam him up, Scotty. Is this really the time for you to point out that you don't believe aliens are real and no one has been abducted? Let the poor man have his beer and conspiracy theory. Generally speaking, this particular conspiracy is innocuous.

Choose Your Battles - Part II

Some disinformation may be harmful so decide if you want to engage. Think about what it is that may help to persuade the other person. Do they respond to data? Do they need an anecdote (based on evidence)? Do they need to tell you about it so they feel heard? Let people talk. Then think about how to engage with them.

Choose Your Battles - Part III

Some conspiracy theories are not harmless. Generally, if someone has gone down a conspiracy theory rabbit hole there isn't much you can say or do at the holiday dinner table - or anywhere - to change that person's mind. Try reminding the offender about the ground rules or find some other common ground. Redirecting and changing the subject may work. Go into another room, change the subject or just leave.



Stay fact-based this holiday season

A holiday gift for you. Get your copy of Fake News, Witch Hunts & Conspiracy Theories.

Use code FAKENEWS at checkout via IndiePubs.com

Want to have a little holiday fun?
Play Bingo - disinformation edition.



"Do your own research"	"I hadn't heard that. Where did you get the info?"	"I don't trust."	"I understand your reason to question."	"Let that sink in"
"Some things are really confusing but..."	"Elections are rigged"	You listened and heard without judgment	"Bigfoot is real"	You stepped away
"Doctors are all paid by big pharma"	You showed compassion		"They said 'who is they?'"	"The moon landing didn't happen"
You remember that no one is stupid	"Vaccines do more harm than good"	"I saw it on TikTok"	"I really want it to be true"	You found common ground
"The main stream media is fake news"	You cared before you shared	"It's a witch hunt"	You successfully changed the subject	"There are no coincidences"

Need more help? My holiday gift to you - 30% off my book Fake News, Witch Hunts & Conspiracy Theories at IndiePubs.com. Enter code: FAKENEWS