

Holiday Jobs

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Family and friends, enormous feasts, glittery decorations, and long-standing traditions are what the holidays are all about. For most people, this is a time of excitement, fun, and celebration. However, for a person with anxiety, the holidays can bring fear and stress. It can be difficult to engage in social activities that often pervade the holiday season. School socials, office parties, and family dinners may bring on extensive expectations with family, friends, and colleagues. Trying to fit in and assimilate into these festivities may seem like more work than play.

If playing feels more like working, why not use that to help get you through to the New Year. Use the 'all work no play' method to your advantage. Work through the anxiety that the thought of attending these social functions may cause by actually 'working' through them. There are several types of jobs that you can acquire that may help you survive this season.

An Actor – Act the part, put on a smile, and recite the lines necessary to interact with family and friends. Some examples are, "How was your year?" "What are your holiday plans?" and "What are your New Years resolutions?" Everyone at some point 'acts' like they are having fun.

A Security Guard –If mingling isn't your thing, this may be the perfect job for you. Security is important at all parties because this is the person that watches over everything. Do the rounds, fill people's cups, and pass out hors d'oeuvres. This makes it easy to engage in small talk without having to commit to any real conversations. "Would you like some more wine?" "The food is great."

A Doctor – Doctors often just ask a lot of questions without having to engage in a lot of dialogue. "How are you doing" "Where are you from?" "How's the family?" Preparing a list of simple generic questions will reduce anxiety and be good smooth conversation starters.

A Politician – "Speak softly and carry a big stick" Teddy Roosevelt had the right idea. You don't have to be the loudest one in the room, sometimes it makes sense to just nod and smile. And for the big stick, maybe try a strong handshake instead.

A Historian- "Smile!" Be the person who takes all the pictures. It is easy to walk around behind a camera. If tensions build, just snap a picture. Then you can move on. This job requires very little commitment to any one location or person.

Acquiring a new job may be a great start to helping you cope with the upcoming events. In addition to the above advice, remember to:

Use self-talk to remind yourself that your uncomfortable thoughts are a way that your mind overreacts to normal life events. It is also important to sit through uncomfortable feelings, as most feelings quickly pass, rather than running away

from them and making them stronger. You can always look to your family and friends for support. So pick a job that works for you and have some fun.