

# Wellness Wednesday



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## Holiday Boundaries You Need To Set This Year, According To Therapists

The holiday season is often portrayed as a time of joy and celebration, but for many of us, it can also be a source of stress and overwhelm. From financial pressures to social obligations, the festive season can leave us feeling depleted rather than fulfilled. That's why it's important to set boundaries that prioritize our well-being and ensure a happier and healthier holiday season.

In this Wellness Wednesday, we'll explore the insights and advice of therapists on the key holiday boundaries you need to set this year. By implementing these boundaries, you'll not only protect your mental and emotional well-being but also create more time and space for the things that truly matter.

### The Importance of Holiday Boundaries

The holiday season can be a double-edged sword, offering both joy and stress. While it's natural to want to make the most of this festive time, it's essential to recognize the potential toll it can take on our well-being. By setting boundaries, we create a framework that allows us to navigate the holiday season with more ease and balance.

Therapists emphasize that boundaries are not selfish or restrictive; instead, they are an act of self-care and self-preservation. By setting clear limits and communicating our needs, we protect ourselves from burnout and ensure that our holiday experience aligns with our values and priorities.

### Financial Boundaries: Managing Your Budget and Spending

One of the significant stressors during the holiday season is financial pressure. Therapists suggest setting clear boundaries around your budget and spending to avoid unnecessary stress and debt. Here are some strategies to consider:

- Create a Realistic Budget:** Start by assessing your financial situation and determining how much you can comfortably allocate to holiday expenses. Consider your income, savings, and other financial commitments to establish a realistic budget.
- Communicate with Loved Ones:** Discuss your financial boundaries with family and friends early on. Let them know that you have set a budget and that you won't be able to participate in expensive gift exchanges or events that may strain your finances.
- Explore Meaningful Alternatives:** Instead of focusing on material gifts, explore alternative ways to show love and appreciation. Consider homemade gifts, experiences, or acts of service that carry more sentimental value without breaking the bank.
- Avoid Comparison and Overspending:** Social media and advertising can create a sense of pressure to buy more and compete with others. Remember that the holiday spirit is about connection and gratitude, not material possessions. Set boundaries around comparison and resist the temptation to overspend.

## Relationship Boundaries: Communicating Your Needs and Boundaries

Effective communication is key to maintaining healthy relationships during the holiday season. Setting relationship boundaries allows you to express your needs and ensure mutual respect and understanding. Consider the following strategies:

1. **Reflect on Your Needs:** Take time to reflect on your needs and expectations for your relationships during the holiday season. Identify any potential areas of tension or concern and determine what boundaries you need to set.
2. **Communicate Openly:** Have open and honest conversations with your loved ones about your boundaries, needs, and expectations. Clearly communicate what you are comfortable with and what you would like to avoid.
3. **Listen and Validate:** Be open to hearing the boundaries and needs of others. Practice active listening and validate their perspectives and feelings. Mutual respect and understanding are crucial for maintaining healthy relationships.
4. **Negotiate and Compromise:** Recognize that setting boundaries is a collaborative process. Be willing to negotiate and find compromises that honor everyone's needs and create a harmonious holiday experience.

## Gift Boundaries: Setting Limits and Finding Meaningful Alternatives

Gift-giving can be a significant source of stress and financial strain during the holiday season. Setting boundaries around gifts allows you to maintain financial stability and focus on meaningful gestures. Consider the following strategies:

1. **Discuss Gift Expectations:** Have open conversations with your loved ones about gift-giving expectations. Explore alternatives such as setting spending limits, participating in gift exchanges, or focusing on experiences rather than material gifts.
2. **Consider Homemade or Personalized Gifts:** Embrace the sentiment behind homemade or personalized gifts. These thoughtful gestures often carry more meaning and create a lasting impression.
3. **Explore Non-Material Gifts:** Instead of focusing solely on material possessions, consider non-material gifts such as quality time, acts of service, or shared experiences. These alternatives can create precious memories and deepen your relationships.
4. **Practice Gratitude:** Encourage an attitude of gratitude by expressing appreciation for the thought and effort behind each gift, regardless of its monetary value. Emphasize the importance of connection and love over material possessions.



## Social Boundaries: Saying No and Prioritizing Self-Care

The holiday season is often filled with social gatherings and obligations. While it's essential to connect with loved ones, it's equally important to set boundaries that prioritize your well-being. Here are some social boundaries to consider:

**Prioritize Your Needs:** Assess your energy levels and emotional well-being before committing to social events. It's okay to decline invitations or limit your attendance to events that align with your needs and values.

1. **Communicate Assertively:** Practice clear and honest communication when declining or modifying social engagements. Be respectful but firm in expressing your boundaries and the reasons behind them.
2. **Plan Self-Care Activities:** Set aside time for self-care during the holiday season. Whether it's taking a long bath, going for a walk, or simply enjoying a quiet evening alone, prioritize activities that replenish your energy and promote relaxation.
3. **Create Boundaries Around Work Functions:** If you have work-related social events, be mindful of your boundaries. Set limits on the number of events you attend and establish a clear separation between work and personal time.



## Emotional Boundaries: Navigating Family Dynamics and Expectations

Family gatherings can be a significant source of stress during the holiday season. Setting emotional boundaries allows you to navigate family dynamics and manage expectations effectively. Here are some strategies to consider:

1. **Clarify Your Boundaries:** Reflect on your emotional needs and establish clear boundaries around what you are willing to engage in and what topics are off-limits. Communicate these boundaries openly and assertively with your loved ones.
2. **Practice Self-Awareness:** Be mindful of your emotional triggers and reactions during family gatherings. Take breaks when needed, engage in grounding techniques, and prioritize self-care to maintain emotional well-being.
3. **Set Realistic Expectations:** Release the pressure to create a picture-perfect holiday experience. Embrace imperfections and focus on meaningful connections rather than striving for perfection or meeting unrealistic expectations.
4. **Seek Support:** If family dynamics are particularly challenging, consider seeking support from a therapist or counselor. They can provide valuable guidance and strategies for navigating difficult emotions and maintaining healthy boundaries.

## Technology Boundaries: Disconnecting to Reconnect with Loved Ones

In today's digital age, technology boundaries are essential for maintaining healthy relationships and fostering present-moment awareness. Consider implementing the following boundaries with technology during the holiday season:

1. **Designate Tech-Free Times:** Set specific times during the day when you disconnect from technology and fully engage with loved ones. Create tech-free zones during meals, family activities, or designated relaxation times.
2. **Establish Communication Guidelines:** Communicate with your loved ones about your desire for present-moment connection. Encourage everyone to be mindful of their technology use and prioritize face-to-face interactions.
3. **Use Technology Mindfully:** When using technology, be intentional and purposeful. Use it to enhance your holiday experience, whether it's sharing photos, organizing virtual gatherings, or connecting with loved ones who are far away.
4. **Utilize Digital Well-being Tools:** Take advantage of digital well-being features on your devices. Set time limits on social media apps, enable "Do Not Disturb" modes during designated times, and use screen time tracking to ensure you're not spending excessive time online.

## Health Boundaries: Prioritizing Physical and Mental Well-being

Amidst the holiday rush, it's crucial not to neglect your physical and mental health. Setting health boundaries allows you to prioritize self-care and maintain your well-being. Consider implementing the following strategies:

1. **Stick to Healthy Habits:** Maintain your regular exercise routine, prioritize nutritious meals, and ensure you get enough sleep. These foundational habits will help you maintain your physical and mental well-being during the holiday season.
2. **Practice Stress-Management Techniques:** Incorporate stress-management techniques into your daily routine. This may include mindfulness meditation, deep breathing exercises, or engaging in hobbies that bring you joy and relaxation.
3. **Establish Boundaries Around Alcohol Consumption:** Alcohol consumption often increases during the holiday season. Set limits for yourself and be mindful of your alcohol intake. Remember that excessive drinking can impact your physical and mental well-being.
4. **Seek Support When Needed:** If you find yourself struggling with your mental health during the holiday season, don't hesitate to seek support. Reach out to a therapist, counselor, or helpline to ensure you have the resources and guidance you need.

Setting boundaries during the holiday season is not about being selfish or restrictive; it's about prioritizing your well-being and creating a more fulfilling and balanced experience. By implementing the strategies and insights shared by therapists, you can navigate the holiday season with greater ease, protect your mental and emotional health, and create lasting memories with loved ones.

Remember, you have the power to shape your holiday experience. By setting boundaries that align with your values and priorities, you can embrace a holiday season that truly reflects who you are and what you cherish most. So this year, let's make a commitment to ourselves and our loved ones. Let's prioritize our well-being, set boundaries, and create a holiday season filled with joy, connection, and meaningful moments





# SUGAR PLUM BAKED BIE BITES



## INGREDIENTS

### Ingredients

- 1 (8-oz) tube crescent dough sheet , or original crescent roll
- cooking spray, for pan
- flour, for dusting
- 1 (8-oz) wheel of brie
- 1/4 cup Sugar Plum Jam, raspberry, strawberry or fig jam
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans

### BITE-SIZED AND MESS-FREE

One of the reasons why these baked brie bites are ideal for holiday parties is their bite-sized nature. These one-bite wonders can be easily passed around, allowing guests to enjoy a delicious appetizer without the need for utensils or creating a mess. The flaky, buttery crust holds together the creamy brie, fruity jam, and crunchy pecans, ensuring that every bite is bursting with flavor.

### SIMPLE AND DELICIOUS

Not only are these baked brie bites easy to make, but they also require just four simple ingredients. Crescent dough serves as the base, providing a light and flaky crust. A wheel of brie cheese adds a creamy and indulgent element, while sugar plum jam (or any jam of your choice) brings a sweet and tangy flavor. Finally, chopped pecans provide a delightful crunch that complements the other ingredients perfectly.

### Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 brie bite, Calories: 78 kcal, Carbohydrates: 6 g, Protein: 2.5 g, Fat: 5 g, Saturated Fat: 2 g, Cholesterol: 9.5 mg, Sodium: 133 mg, Sugar: 2 g



## INSTRUCTIONS



## HOW TO MAKE IT

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F and grease a mini muffin tin with cooking spray.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the crescent dough. If using the roll dough, pinch the seams together to create a solid sheet of dough. Cut the dough into 24 squares.
3. Place each square of dough into a muffin tin slot, pressing gently to form a cup shape.
4. Cut the brie into small pieces and place them inside each crescent dough cup.
5. Top each cup with half a teaspoon of sugar plum jam and half a teaspoon of chopped pecans.
6. Bake the brie bites in the preheated oven for 12 to 15 minutes or until the crescent pastry is golden and the brie is melted and gooey.
7. Serve the baked brie bites warm and enjoy!

### VARIATIONS TO TRY

While the sugar plum jam adds a delightful twist to these baked brie bites, you can experiment with different flavors to suit your taste. Here are a few variations you can try:

**JAM:** Substitute the sugar plum jam with raspberry, strawberry, or fig jam for a different fruity flavor profile. Cranberry: Instead of using jam, try using cranberry sauce for a tangy and festive twist.

**NUTS:** If pecans aren't your favorite, swap them out for walnuts or even almonds for added variety.

**HERBS:** For an extra touch of flavor, sprinkle fresh rosemary or thyme leaves on top of each brie bite before baking.

## FEATURED EXERCISE

[https://www.self.com/gallery/shoulder-and-triceps-workout?utm\\_source=nl&utm\\_brand=self&utm\\_mailing=SLF\\_Daily\\_Clickers\\_112723&utm\\_campaign=aud-dev&utm\\_medium=email&bxid=5cc9e0d8fc942d13eb1f0ccf&cndid=46335019&hasha=7f37a73d9ef9510a5035cccc57c6ee5&hashb=ddf96185f2f29ca245fd1f9d995010c3676a94f8&hashc=3e70b5dafc029adb9f285ded93641852bcb8240bf226b44d2d3ab762b34e15c3&esrc=self\\_swps\\_india&utm\\_term=SLF\\_Daily\\_TopClickers](https://www.self.com/gallery/shoulder-and-triceps-workout?utm_source=nl&utm_brand=self&utm_mailing=SLF_Daily_Clickers_112723&utm_campaign=aud-dev&utm_medium=email&bxid=5cc9e0d8fc942d13eb1f0ccf&cndid=46335019&hasha=7f37a73d9ef9510a5035cccc57c6ee5&hashb=ddf96185f2f29ca245fd1f9d995010c3676a94f8&hashc=3e70b5dafc029adb9f285ded93641852bcb8240bf226b44d2d3ab762b34e15c3&esrc=self_swps_india&utm_term=SLF_Daily_TopClickers)

## Featured Exercise ► Arnold Press



## HOW TO DO IT:

1. Starting Position: Begin by standing with your feet shoulder-width apart and holding a dumbbell in each hand. Position the dumbbells in front of you, with your palms facing towards your shoulders, as if you have just completed a bicep curl. Keep your elbows close to your waist.
2. Upward Movement: Without allowing your elbows to flare out, push the dumbbells up overhead. As you lift, rotate your wrists so that your palms face away from you. This rotation creates a cork-screw-like motion as the dumbbells ascend.
3. Full Extension: Continue pressing until your arms are fully extended overhead. Pause briefly at the top of the movement, ensuring that you maintain control and stability.
4. Downward Movement: To complete the repetition, reverse the movement by slowly lowering the dumbbells back to the starting position. Maintain control throughout the descent.
5. Repetition: Repeat the exercise for the desired number of repetitions, focusing on proper form and maintaining control throughout the entire range of motion.

## BENEFITS:

If you're looking to build massive shoulders and want to take inspiration from the best, look no further than Arnold Schwarzenegger. After winning seven Mr. Olympias, it's safe to say that Arnold knows a thing or two about creating exercises that specifically target the shoulders. One such exercise that has become synonymous with Arnold is the Arnold Press.



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Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



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