



Cognitive Impairment, Dementia, and the Holidays

How to Celebrate During the Pandemic

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Holidays can be wonderful *and* stressfuleven without COVID

Benefits

Joyful memories and traditions

Connecting with family and friends

Fun festivities

Nostalgic music, delicious food

A time for gratitude and hope

Challenges

More organizing and planning

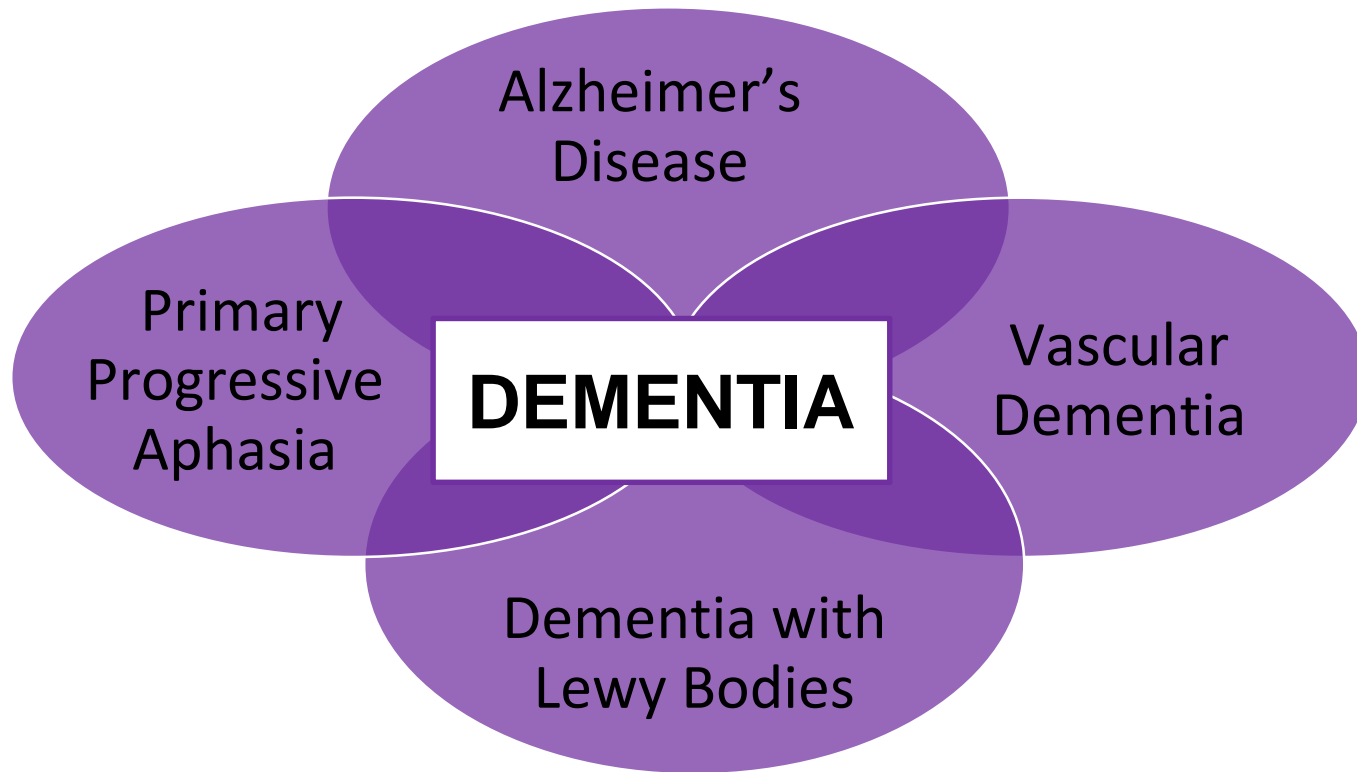
Stress, family dynamics

Financial strain

Changing weather

Grieving and loss

The Many Faces of Cognitive Impairment

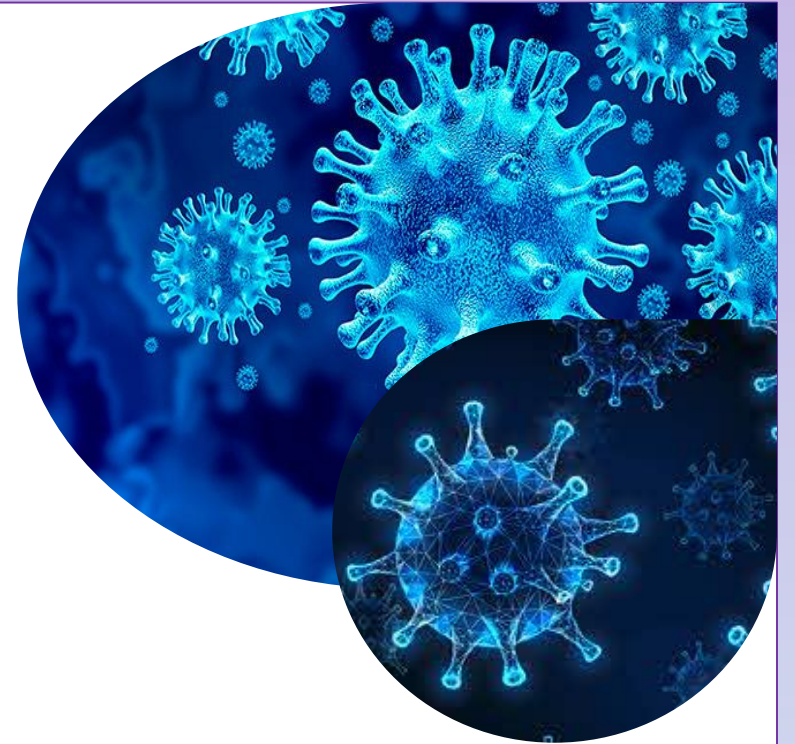


Common difficulties:

- Repeating conversations
- Confusion
- Difficulty remembering names
- Embarrassing behaviors
- Trouble participating in the conversation
- Anger/frustration

2020 Holidays Look Different

- COVID-19 Pandemic
 - Balancing human connection vs. safety
 - Managing traditions and expectations
 - Change in access to resources and support
 - Coping with fear and uncertainty
 - Grief and Loss
- Social and political climate
 - What if you don't see eye to eye?



Challenges of Technology

Computers

- Slow connections & freezing
- Poor audio
- How to use
- Talking over each other
- Hard to track multiple people

Phone

- Poor connection
- Muffled
- Can't see the person you are speaking with
- Dropped calls
- Delays in audio



The 10,000 Foot View: Guiding Principles



1. Prioritize

- Prioritize! What is most important?
 - Balancing wants and needs: Patient, caregiver, family, friends
 - Quality or quantity
- Delegate where you can
 - Is someone there to help facilitate the communication?
- Set the environment
 - Less is more: minimize distractions and transitions
 - Time of day matters
 - Use holiday cues: smells, music
- Don't leave out self-care!

Frustrations and confusion with technology may impact the entire experience and add a layer of complexity to the interaction.

2. Adjusting Expectations

- Doing things differently is hard!
- Hope for the best and plan for the rest!
 - Set the boundaries for the interaction
 - Ex: Smaller zoom sessions rather than a large one or using the phone vs video chat
- Managing & adjusting expectations
 - Be realistic
 - Address in advance
 - Flexibility is key
- Be present in the moment
 - Focus on what really matters
 - Allow yourself space to feel the feelings

3. Talking to Children

- Talk honestly to younger family members before the interaction
- As the holiday approaches, watch for warning signs:
 - Withdrawal
 - New pain or physical discomfort
 - Expressed loss of interest in interacting in the family celebration
 - Short tempered or argumentative
- Follow their lead
- After the celebration, allow for an opportunity for children to express their feelings

4. Communication and Meaningful Connection

- Hearing aids/Headphones
- Keep in mind:
 - Enter into their reality
 - Avoid correcting misinformation
 - Redirect topics : Pre-select a few familiar go to topics
- First Learned, Last Lost

- Restate information as if it's the first time every time
 - ❌ "you already asked me that"
- Avoid quizzing questions
 - ❌ Where did we go last summer, remember?
 - ✓ Last summer we went to the beach. Here's a picture. We had so much fun!
- Use the senses when possible
 - Taste, touch, smell, sight, sound

Maximizing Virtual Communication

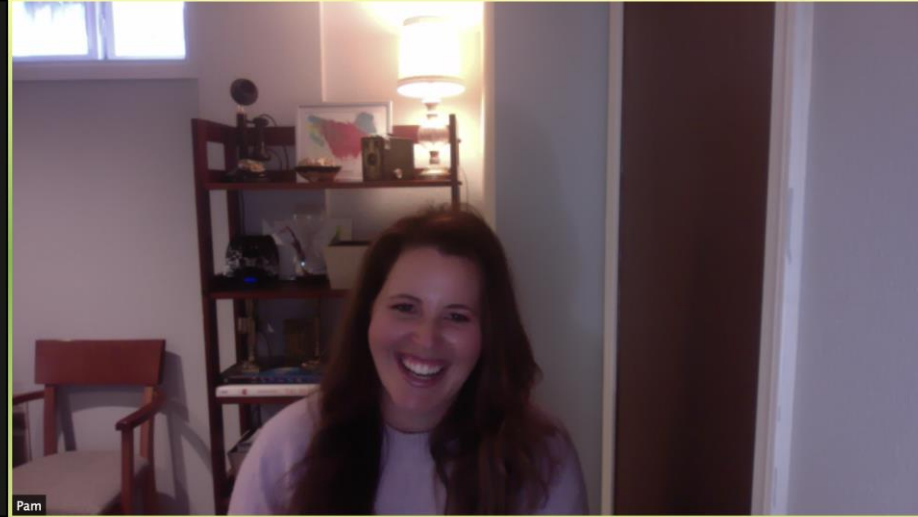
- Introduce yourself (“Hi Grandma, this is Pam, I’m in Seattle”)
- Include names with faces
- Take turns talking
- Keep sentences simple with brief pauses
 - Slow down
 - This can feel uncomfortable, but this allows for time to process information and participate.
- Show emotion through visual gestures
 - Wave
 - Thumbs up
 - Thank you (placing a hand on your heart)
- Don’t forget to laugh...humor can be therapeutic

✓: Hi Grandpa. I have something cool to share. I got a new car. It’s red.

✗: Hi Grandpa, I had the coolest week. We went shopping for cars and I test drove a bunch until I found the one I loved.



Brian



Pam



Jenner



Evan

Mute ...

End

Practical Tips for a Joyful COVID Holiday Season



Pandemic Holidays: Living Environment

Alone

- Deliver meals or meal delivery
- Send a care package
- Send decorations, cards, pictures, gifts
- Use technology if not too stressful: send a video message
- Drive by (blow kisses, wave, sing)

In a facility

- Anything above if possible
- Ask staff if they can deliver written messages, cards etc
- Keep in mind if this will be more distressing/confusing to change their routine

At home

- Involve loved one as much as they would enjoy, but don't push
- Predictable and Routine.
- Keep this in mind with timing that sleep may be more necessary
- Show pictures, play music they enjoy

Pandemic Holidays: Gatherings

In Person/Residence

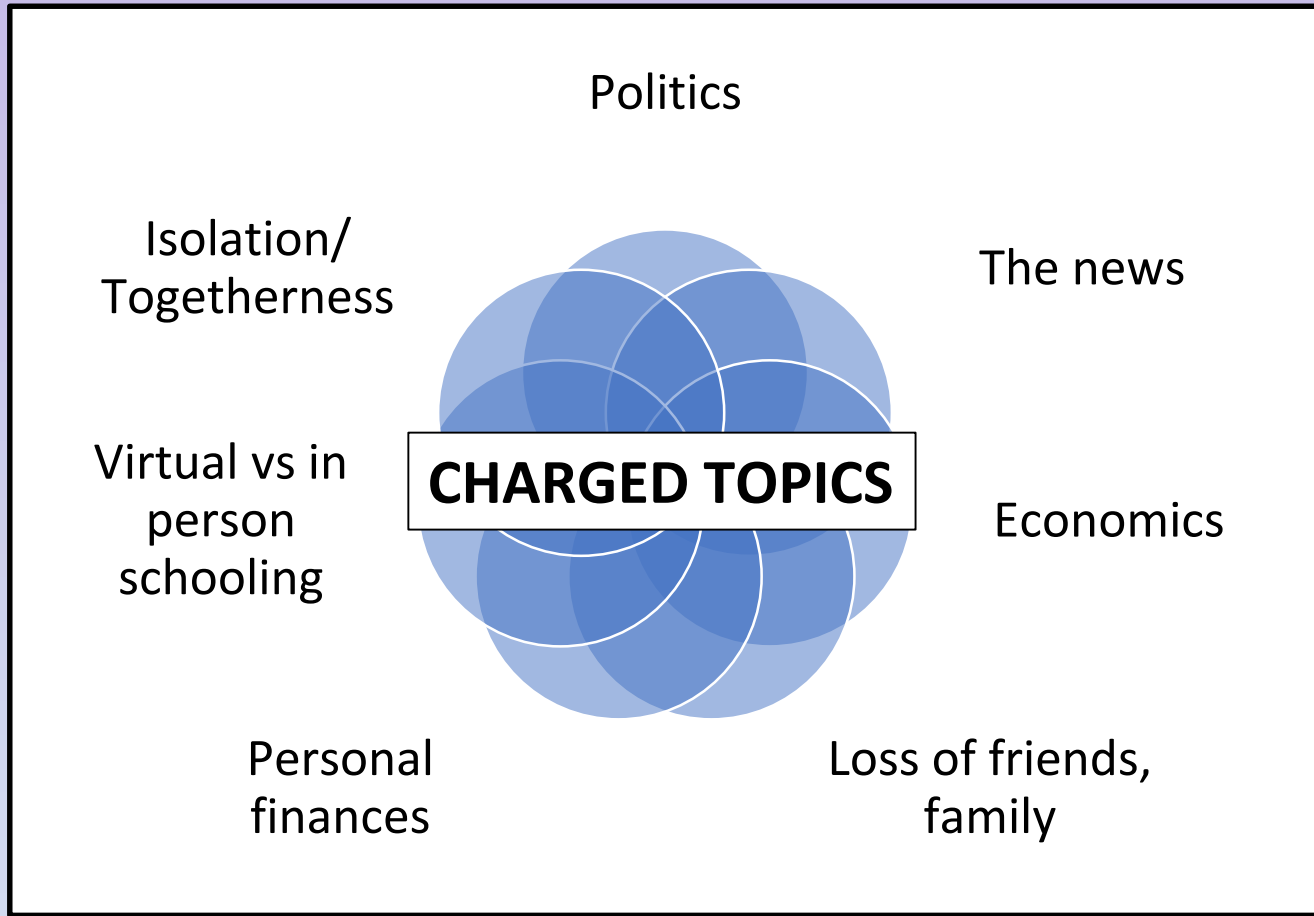
- Have a quiet place they can go if/when needed
- Allow for opportunities for each person to share
- Watch their behavior for cues (sad, confused, overwhelmed, tired)

Virtual

- Ask first: consider if it is not stressful!
- Video vs. telephone
- Delegate responsibilities to tech savvy family members; identify help as needed
- Who will participate (and when)

Watch for behavior cues: sad, confused, overwhelmed, tired etc

Pandemic Holidays: Stressful Topics



**Redirect the
conversation as
necessary**

Pandemic Holidays: Activities to do together

- Gratitude
- Watch a movie together
- Sing or make music
- Play games
- Draw/art
- Bake/Decorate baked goods
- Make decorations
- Look at photos of family/friends



Summary

Take Home Points

- ✓ Holidays can be wonderful...and stressful
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has added an extra layer to this
- ✓ Whether apart, virtual, or together:
 - Prioritize what matters the most
 - Be flexible and adjust expectations
 - Optimize communication and meaningful connections
 - Practice having grace on yourself....this is hard!
- ✓ Think about your loved one:
 - Which approaches, tools, and resources work best

Draw meaning from the present experience, rather than how it compares to the past

FYI: Resources and Mobile Device Guides

MOBILE DEVICE INFORMATION GUIDE

Android™ Devices

BASICS

What is an app?

App is short for 'application.' Apps are programs that you can use on mobile devices (smartphone or tablet). Some apps can be downloaded for free. Other apps may cost money.

How do I get an app?

The Play Store is an icon on Android devices that acts as a store to download new apps. Any app that is made for Android devices should be found by searching the name or category.

Wireless Network or Wi-Fi

Wireless Network or Wi-Fi allows you to use wireless internet in a local area. Users can connect to Wi-Fi on their devices such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops. This is different than the internet connection that comes from your data plan.

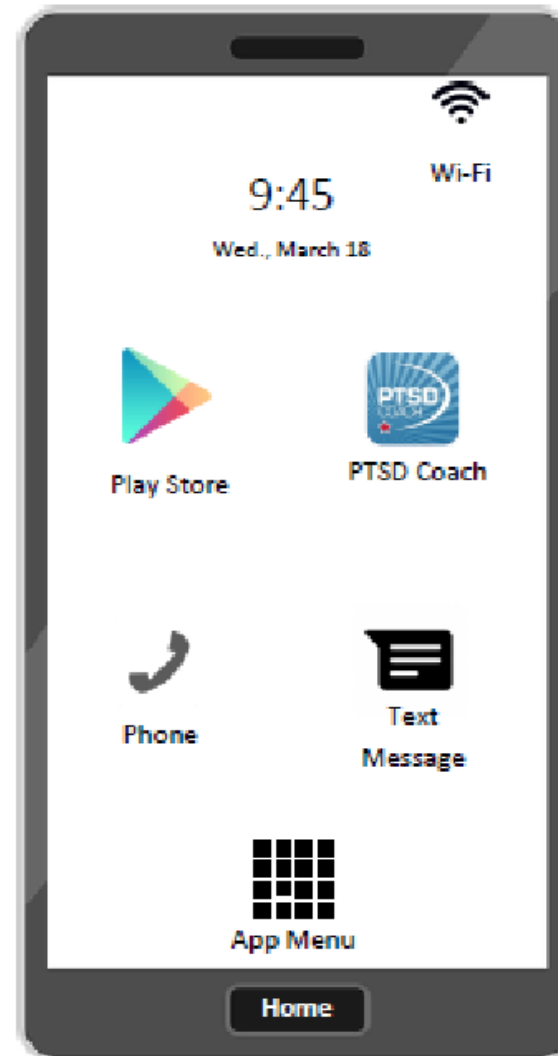
Be careful about what information you send over public Wi-Fi (e.g., at libraries, coffee shops).

Data & Data Plans

On a mobile device, data represents the amount of internet you use when you are not connected to Wi-Fi. Some apps also will use data if you are not connected to Wi-Fi.

Your data plan refers to the amount of data that you pay for in your cellular plan. You are using your data plan when you are not connected to Wi-Fi.

Example Screen



SYMBOLS GLOSSARY

Android™



Go backwards (go to previous screen)



Bluetooth technology



Wi-Fi



Screen Brightness
(adjust to make the screen brighter/darker)



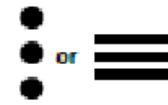
Settings
(access to general, security, and accessibility settings)



Create something new
(Example: Create a contact)



Search function



Menu – either symbol represent Menus,
depending on your device



See all of your open apps and programs on
your device at once



See all of your apps on your device
(the number of squares in this icon may differ)



Text message



Email

HOW TO DOWNLOAD Android™

Step 1: Find Play Store.

1. Make sure you are connected to internet using Wi-Fi or cellular data.



2. Using your Android device (smartphone or tablet), tap on icon for the Play Store.

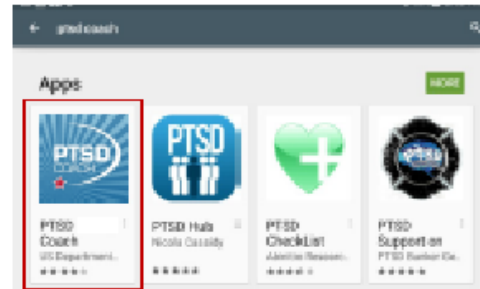


Step 2: Search for the app.

3. Search for the name of the app. For example, type in: PTSD Coach.

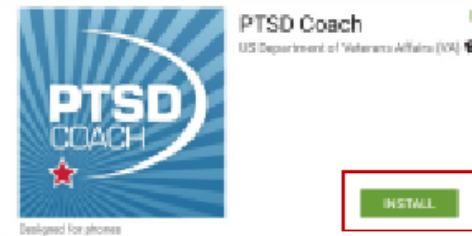


4. Scroll through the Play Store until you find the app. Tap the app icon.



Step 3: Install app.

5. Tap Install.



Step 4: Open and use.

6. Wait for app to be installed and then tap OPEN.



7. When the app is open, follow the on-screen instructions.



MOBILE DEVICE INFORMATION GUIDE

Apple iOS® Devices

BASICS

What is an app?

App is short for 'application.' Apps are programs that you can use on mobile devices (smartphones or tablets). Some apps can be downloaded for free. Other apps may cost money.

How do I get an app?

The App Store is a virtual store for Apple iOS devices where you can download new apps. Search for specific apps by name or by category.

Wireless Network or Wi-Fi

Wireless Network or Wi-Fi allows you to use wireless internet in a local area. Users can connect to Wi-Fi on their devices such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops. This is different than the internet connection that comes from your data plan.

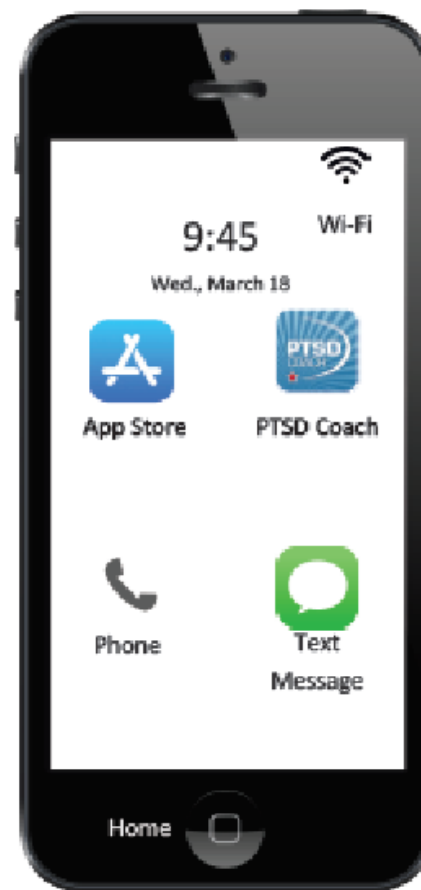
Be careful about what information you send over public Wi-Fi (e.g., at libraries, coffee shops).

Data & Data Plans

Data refers to the amount of email, internet searches, and streaming of music or videos used when you are not connected to Wi-Fi.

Your data plan refers to the amount of data that you pay for in your cellular plan. You are using your data plan when you are not connected to Wi-Fi.

Example Screen



SYMBOLS GLOSSARY

Apple iOS®



Go backwards (go to previous screen)



Bluetooth technology



Wi-Fi



Screen Brightness
(adjust to make the screen brighter/darker)



Settings
(access to general, security, and accessibility settings)



Create something new
(Example: Create a contact)



Search function



Privacy information and settings
(within settings)



Passcode and Finger Print ID (password)
(newer iPhones use Face ID)



Text message



Email

HOW TO DOWNLOAD Apple IOS®

Find App Store.

1. Make sure you are connected to internet using **Wi-Fi** or cellular data.



2. Using your Apple device (iPhone or iPad), tap on icon for the **App Store**.



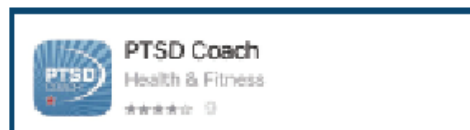
Search for the app.

3. Search for the name of the app using the search bar at the top of the screen. For example, type in: **PTSD Coach**.

Search

🔍 ptsd coach 🌐 Cancel

4. Scroll through the App Store until you find the app.



Install app.

5. Tap **Get** to install the app. Use your password, finger print, or face ID.



Open and use.

6. Wait for app to be installed.



7. Tap icon on your home screen. Follow the on-screen instructions.





Different Video Chat Options

- Apple
Facetime
- Skype
- Zoom

Helpful Resources

- National Institute on Aging: Holiday Hints for Alzheimer's Caregivers
 - <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/holiday-hints-alzheimers-caregivers>
- The Holidays and Alzheimer's During COVID-19
 - <https://www.alz.org/help-support/resources/holidays>
- Parent Resources for Children
 - https://www.alz.org/documents/national/brochure_childrenteens.pdf
- Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline: 800-272-3900



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Thank you and Happy Holidays

Questions?