Winter Holiday

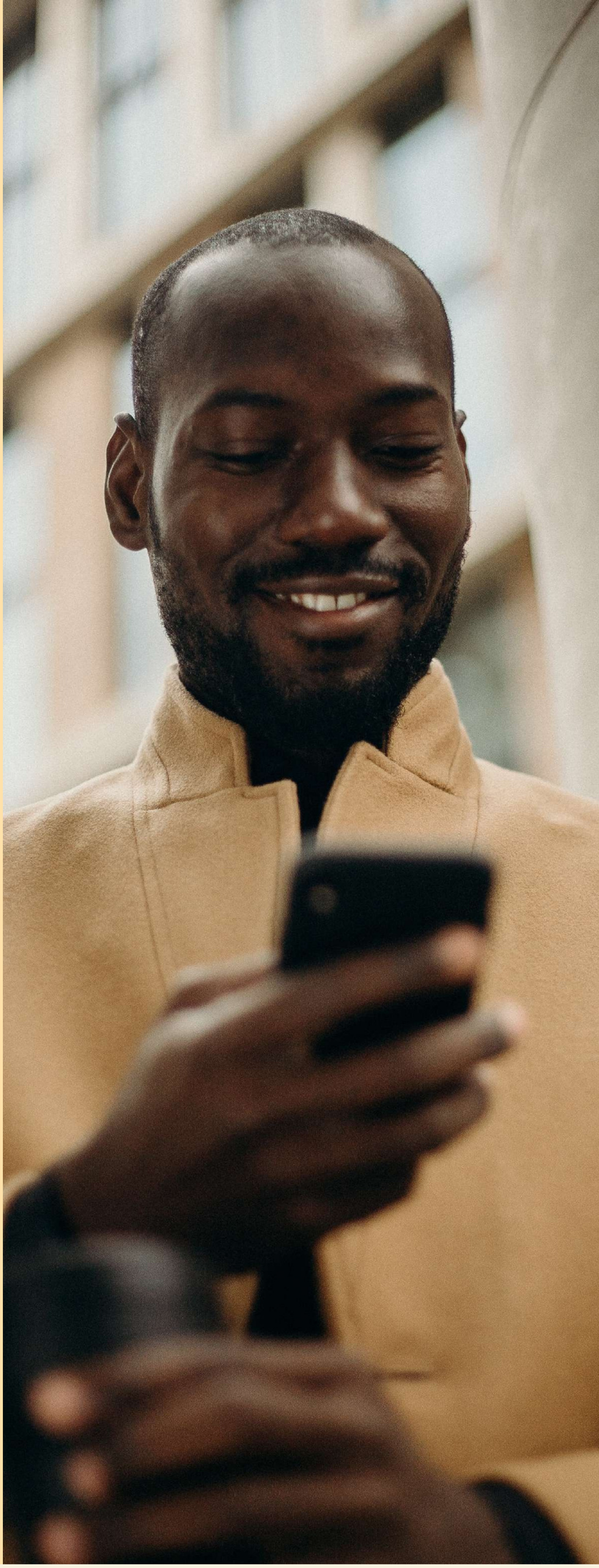
WITH DR. SHEILA PATEL



Anchor yourself in balancing practices that support mind, body, and spirit during the holidays and enjoy the gifts of the season.

innernow

Use this e-book with the Winter Holiday Series in the Innernow App.



SESSION 1

Mindful Eating During the Holidays

Explore mindful eating over the holiday season to stay balanced and feel your best.

To get started, listen to Session 1 of the Winter Holiday series in the InnerNow App.





“Mindful eating means we’re paying attention and present with our food when we eat.

The holiday season brings opportunities for lots of fun and celebration, and at the same time, the potential to fall out of our healthy eating habits that we’ve cultivated the rest of the year.
We may become thrown off of our usual eating habits and it can take some time after the holidays to get back on track.
Instead of deprivation and completely avoiding your favorite foods, which doesn’t work very well, or suppressing the desire to eat the meals that your family and friends create, you can enjoy the delicious flavors of the holidays while maintaining balance using mindful eating techniques.

Mindful eating means we’re paying attention and present with our food when we eat. We aren’t thinking about what happened in the past or planning for something in the future, but we are present with our meal, in the moment.
When we do this, we slow down, enjoy our food, and listen to the signals of the body to tell us when we are full.
We can make conscious choices about what, and how much, we eat because we ‘re fully present.

Tips to eat mindfully during the holidays:

- Pay attention to all your senses when you eat.
- Eat slowly. Chew your food and savor the tastes. Put your fork or spoon down between bites.
- Eat until you are satisfied, but not overly full. When you eat slowly, you have a chance to feel full before overeating.

Let’s sum it up!

- The holiday season brings opportunities for fun and celebration, but it’s also a time we may feel out of balance.
- We can enjoy the festivities and stay balanced through mindful eating.
- Mindful eating means slowing down and being present with our food when we eat, and listening to the signals of the body to tell us when we’re full.



SESSION 2

Managing Emotions During the Holidays

Tune in and access equanimity this holiday season to soothe the mind and support your mental and emotional health.

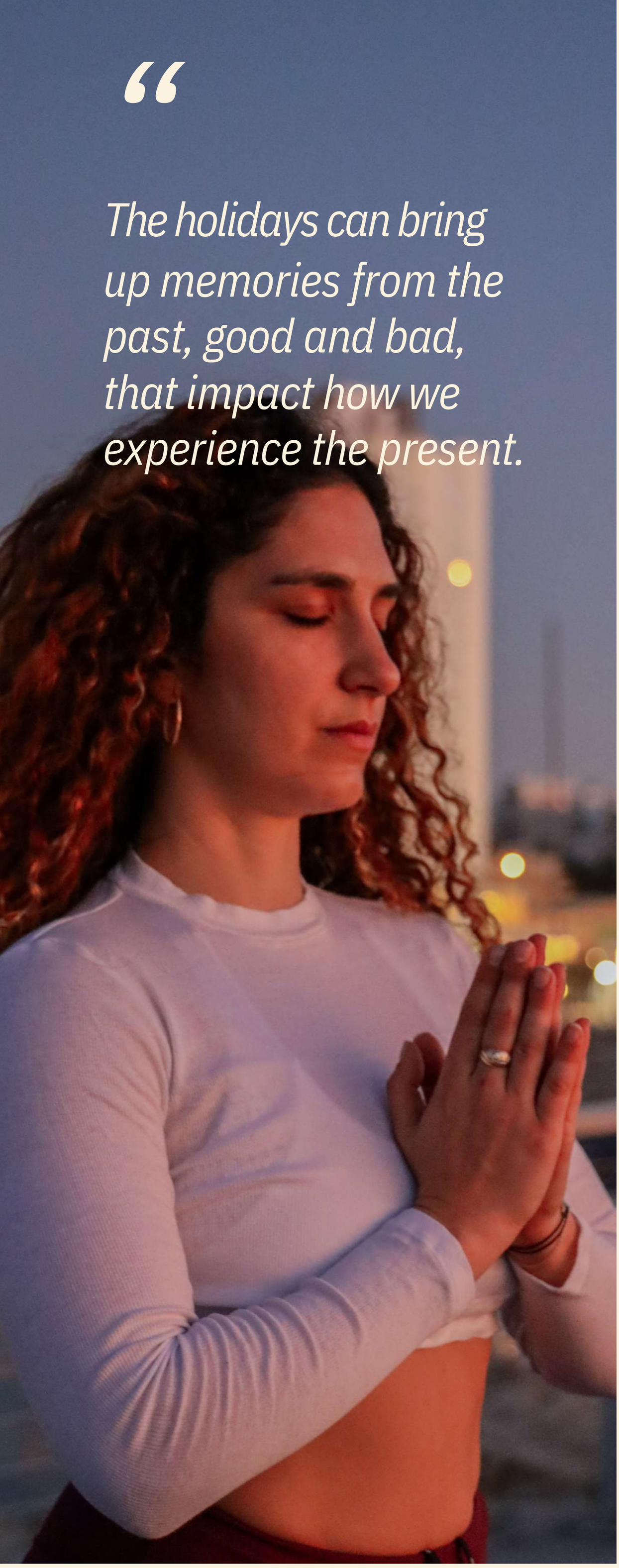
To get started, listen to Session 2 of the Winter Holiday series in the InnerNow App.





Although we often associate the holidays with fun and laughter, it can also be one of the most stressful times of the year. We may see family or friends that we haven't seen for some time, or find ourselves spending time with people with differing beliefs and ideas. We also may find ourselves spending time with people with whom we've had challenges in the past. Or perhaps we're not able to see the people we love due to physical distance or other circumstances. From a spiritual perspective, we often create our own suffering by not accepting what is, by resisting the present moment. The holidays can bring up memories from the past, good and bad, that impact how we experience the present. If we have had challenging experiences or trauma in our family relationships, this time of year can cause a resurfacing of emotions we've buried.

Also, if we perceived our holidays as perfect childhood memories, we may put undue stress on ourselves to make the holidays "perfect" for our current families.
From an Ayurvedic lens, we all experience things differently, depending on our primary dosha, and whether we're in balance or not.
Sensitive Vatas love connecting with others, but may find themselves taking in the emotions and stress of others around them.
Pittas are the ideal planners, but may strive for perfection as hosts, or feel the need to outcompete.
And laid back Kaphas may enjoy from afar, or find themselves wanting to retreat and avoid all of the social interactions altogether.



The holidays can bring up memories from the past, good and bad, that impact how we experience the present.

A simple practice to open your heart and keep emotions balanced

- Repeat silently a few times: *I accept this moment as it is*
- Letting that go, bring in a sense of gratitude. Just feel a sense of appreciation… now silently repeat, *I am grateful for this moment*
- Now notice any emotions that may be coming up, allow them to arise… just be aware of them… now, allowing them to subside, repeat silently, *I love myself and others exactly as they are*
- And now feeling an open and expanded heart, silently repeat, *I surrender to this moment*

You can practice this simple technique whenever you become aware of emotions arising during the holiday season.

Let's sum it up!

- While the holidays are full of festivities, they can also often be a time of stress and managing challenging emotions.
- Understanding your dosha and those of your loved ones can give you insight into what you may need this season.
- Affirmations can help you come back to a space of feeling open, heart-centered, and present.

SESSION 3

Positive Reflections on the Past Year

Reflect on the past year to create space for a happy, healthy new year.

To get started, listen to Session 3 of the Winter Holiday series in the InnerNow App.





One of the best ways to enjoy the holidays is to take the opportunity to reflect on the previous year. Although our minds have a tendency to remember the negative experiences, we can cultivate gratitude for all the positive experiences, as well as creating a new perspective on those things that we perceived as negative.
After all, every experience gives us some opportunity to grow and evolve, especially the hard ones, so we can even be grateful for those.

From an Ayurvedic perspective, our language creates our reality. The stories we tell ourselves, shape the experiences we have. As Buddha said, “what we think, we become…” therefore it’s important to take some time periodically to pay attention to the good things that happen to us, the times we feel joy and peace, and the times we’re feeling connected to others and to our inner self.

Reflection on the past year

- Set aside some time to reflect month by month on the past year and dive deeply into some positive things that happened in your life.

  Re-live those experiences through your senses.

- Take time to write down what you could hear, feel, see, taste, and smell with each experience.

As you make this a regular practice in your life, notice how you begin to create a more positive perspective on your life experiences and how joy and peace can continue to expand in your everyday life.

Let's sum it up!

- Reflecting on the past year is a helpful practice in cultivate gratitude for the positive experiences we have had.
- It can also help us to shift our perspective on what didn't go as planned, and guide us in our opportunities to grow and evolve.
- Take some time to consider the past year and the positive things that happened in your life.



SESSION 4

Post-Holiday Detox

Find balance after the holidays and set intentions for the new year.

To get started, listen to Session 4 of the Winter Holiday series in the InnerNow App.





Part of enjoying the holidays is relaxing with friends and family, gathering for parties and celebrations, and eating your favorite foods.
So, it's OK to loosen up on some of our routine in order to connect.
That being said, when we recognize we haven't been following our normal routine, we may notice some subtle, or not so subtle, changes in our minds and bodies.
If our sleep routine has been off, we can feel sluggish and tired.
We can feel heavy, bloated or have irregular digestion from eating different foods or overeating.

We can also feel a host of emotions from the holidays such as sadness... or anxiety... as the holidays come to an end.
In addition, although we may enjoy seeing family and friends, we may also need to release some of the challenging conversations that may have come up.
In Ayurveda, whenever we have gone through a particularly busy or stressful time, this is a great time to do a cleanse to release any toxicity that has accumulated, and to rekindle the digestive fire, both for digesting our food as well as for digesting our life experiences.

Ayurvedic tips to reset and reboot after a busy holiday season

- Get back to a regular schedule that's aligned with your circadian rhythm. Go to bed by 10:00 PM and wake up by 6:00 AM.
- Drink warm water with lemon or ginger in the morning to stimulate the digestion for the day.
- Meditate and do some slow, deep breathing to calm the nervous system and shift the physiology toward healing and balancing.
- Do some mindful movement during the day to get the circulation going.
- Eat your largest meal at lunch with a light breakfast and dinner based on your hunger level. You may find that post-holiday, your body is craving light and healthy food.
- Drink some warm water or healthy herbal teas throughout the day.
- Take some time before bed for self-care with a warm bath or gentle oil massage.
- Journal to release anything that happened over the holidays that don't uplift you, and have the intention to let it go.





Set intentions for the new year

In Sanskrit, a subtle intention from the heart is called Sankalpa.

When we connect to our hearts, meditate, and set intentions in the field of pure potential, we begin the process of manifesting our intentions.

Take some time to reflect and set intentions for the new year, planting the seeds for what you would like to see manifest in your life.

Let’s sum it up!

- After the holiday season, Ayurveda can help you get back into a regular routine.
- Focus on nutrition, movement, and sleep for a mind, body, and spirit reset.
- Set intentions for the new year to stay aligned with what you would like to see manifest in your life.