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Dear Friends,

Holidays are wonderful....and fraught with anxiety for some. That's why many articles about this time of year are some variation of "how to survive the holidays." Seriously, can't we set a bar higher than survival?

We are often in closer proximity to our families during the holidays than we are at other times of the year, and with that can come challenges. I find this particularly true in this tug-of-war political environment where the false binaries of Democrat and Republican are at serious play, with grave consequences. Reason won't help us here.

And what I have learned many times over is that **the strongest person in a tug of war is the person who doesn't pick up their end of the rope**. So, this holiday season, leave the rope right where it is and don't pick it up. Or if you find you've already picked it up, let it drop. Enjoy how it looks on the floor, having nothing whatsoever to do with you. If the other person won't let it go, tell them you will be glad to talk to them about whatever topic they are raising **at a time that is not now**, as my friend Em Radmacher says. It will free you up in many ways.

Things I've noticed around the web this week that you might like:

1. A worthwhile reading challenge for you in 2020. [52 books by women of color.](#)

2. [Excellent advice on what to say to someone who is dying.](#)
3. I know it's a busy time of year, but do take 6 minutes and 15 seconds for yourself, and listen to [this](#).
4. Having alone time is important. [SCIENCE SAYS SO.](#)
5. Ah, [this famous recipe](#) reminds me of the two years I made all my own bread when I was a graduate student. It might have been because I had little money, or because making bread was a great procrastination device when papers about Yeats and Milton were due.

In the New Year:

First 37 - Starting on January 1st, join me for the first 37 days of 2020. How can you set yourself up for success in the new decade? We will discover, write, see, and create together for the first 37 days of 2020. [Go here for info.](#)

Life is a Verb Camp - The Early Bird Registration rate is available until 12/31/19. Only 45 tickets remain. October 29 - November 1, 2020, near Asheville NC. [Go here](#) to get information and to register. Email support@pattidigh.com to get information on payment plans.

Hard Conversations: Intro to Racism - educate yourself on systemic racism, white privilege and white fragility, the myth of colorblindness, and how to be an effective ally. The 17th cohort of this online class begins on January 7th. For details, [go here.](#)

Peace and light to you for the holidays.

Patti

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