



Iris Alheidt-Pehrishch - Welcome to life

Beyond Coaching

Weekly Impulse:

Weekly changing information and topics about me and my work for you - available as a PDF for download or simply to enjoy.



Iris Alheidt-Pehrishch



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Christmas – A Time for Arguments?

In this edition of my Weekly Impulse, I want to address the following two questions: 1) **Why do family conflicts often escalate during this time of year?** And 2) **What dynamics are at play?**

Family disputes tend to escalate at Christmas because the holidays bring a unique mix of expectations, emotions, and social dynamics. The reasons and dynamics can be categorized into several areas:

1. High Expectations and Perfectionism

Christmas is often associated with idealized notions of harmony, love, and perfect togetherness. When reality doesn't match these expectations, disappointment can lead to conflict. **My tip for you:** Step back from the idealized image and focus on what is, rather than what "should be."

2. Family Roles and Old Patterns

Family members often unconsciously slip back into roles they held as children (e.g., the "difficult child" or the "strict father"). These roles can reactivate conflicts that remained hidden throughout the year. **My tip for you:** Be aware that these old roles have nothing to do with the present. Open communication and setting clear boundaries can help create new roles.

3. Differing Needs and Expectations

Some people long for peace and contemplation, while others want action and socializing. When these expectations clash, conflicts can arise. **My tip for you:** Discuss your needs during the Christmas planning stage and work together to find solutions that suit everyone.

4. Emotional Vulnerability

Christmas often brings deep emotions to the surface – from joy to sadness over losses or challenging relationships. This emotional intensity can increase the likelihood of conflict. **My tip for you:** Learn to manage your emotions consciously rather than being overwhelmed by them. This takes practice, but there are quick techniques to help with acute emotional overwhelm. For example:

Bilateral Stimulation Exercise: Sit in a position where both feet touch the ground. Gently tap your knees alternately (not simultaneously) with your fingers. Breathe deeply and steadily in and out. This simple technique can help regulate your nervous system and calm you down.