



**CASE BARNETT**  
— LAW —



## WHAT'S IN A TRADITION? The Best Holiday Traditions

The holidays are full of traditions. People everywhere pull special decorations from storage, break out their grandma's famous eggnog recipe, or make plans to see "It's a Wonderful Life" at their local theater. There are certain things we do every year without fail. Is it just because we're creatures of habit, or is there a deeper value to traditions?

Personally, I value traditions because they bring me back to my center: my family. Life can be hectic and overwhelming, so we need to remember why we do what we do. Nicole and I spent some time developing personal and business core values, and the main value revolved around family. My favorite traditions involve spending time with the people I love.

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As Nicole and I decorated for the holidays, we reminisced about where we were this time last year. Harlow was just a little nugget who couldn't move around by herself, and Finn was still practically a baby himself. Now, Finn is going to preschool and Harlow has started walking and talking! People grow and change so fast over the course of a single year. It's a reminder to stay present, because you never know where you'll be next year.

Of course, traditions aren't just meant for the holidays. My family practices smaller traditions that remind us of what's important in life. Each morning over breakfast, we share our daily intentions. These are personal focuses for small goals we intend to achieve that day. For



Finn and Harlow picking their favorite Christmas tree!

example, my recent daily intentions have been, "I'm going to be more patient," and "I'll make sure my wife feels loved today." This tradition helps us find our center and gives us insight into what our family members are thinking about each day.

Another family tradition, and one that happens to be our favorite, is something Nicole and I make sure to do every night. When we put Finn down for bed, we ask him for a topic of the day. He'll tell us about his favorite event that happened, and we make up a song about it to sing him to sleep. It's a simple thing, but I think it's pretty awesome, and it brings us closer as a family every day.

At the end of the day, traditions don't have to come with a great deal of pomp and circumstance to be worthwhile. Making gingerbread men every Christmas Eve while watching "Elf" is a fantastic tradition, but so is eating pizza on Fridays during family movie night or reminding your kids to appreciate nature during family walks. If a tradition helps keep us grounded with what we value most in life, then I think it's a tradition worth celebrating.

—Case Barnett



# 3 CREATIVE Gift Wrap Alternatives

There's something magical about seeing a stack of presents wrapped in bright, multicolored paper. However, that enchanting scene quickly evaporates a few hours later when all those wads of wrapping paper and plastic bows are chucked unceremoniously into the garbage. What if we told you there are countless ways you can still enjoy wrapping and unwrapping presents, without all the waste? Here are a few creative gift wrap alternatives to consider this holiday season.

## Brown Paper Bags

With the holiday season comes holiday shopping, and if you opt out of plastic grocery bags, you're sure to have a surplus of brown paper bags in the pantry. Drop a present into the bag, tape it shut, and you're good to go. Add some simple lace or a ribbon for an old-timey feel or get creative with stamps and hand-drawn artwork. This wrap job lets your imagination run wild.

## Old Maps and Calendars

These days, pretty much every phone has a built-in GPS, so you probably won't need the map from your 1999 road trip anytime soon. If you still have

an old map, why not use that for wrapping? The unusual designs guarantee your gifts will be one of a kind. And don't worry if there are notes scrawled across the paper. Old events or directions will add some unique flair to the presents.

## Furoshiki

Fabric is an excellent substitute for wrapping paper. You can use a scarf to create two gifts in one or pull out scraps of fabric from old projects. The traditional Japanese practice of furoshiki is all about wrapping goods in fabric. Described as "functional fabric origami," you'd be amazed at how a few well-placed folds can turn your gift into a work of art. Learn how to wrap anything, from boxes to bottles, at [ceas.ku.edu/furoshiki-instructional-videos](http://ceas.ku.edu/furoshiki-instructional-videos).

You don't have to follow the same gift wrap habits year after year. After the effort you put into finding just the right present, you should be able to make your gift wrap just as special. Find a method that's uniquely you and get started!

# Holiday Special!



## THE 7 BIGGEST MISTAKES THAT CAN RUIN YOUR ACCIDENT CLAIM

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# IS YOUR CALENDAR CHRONICALLY CRAMMED?

## Try This Must-Do Resolution

In her book, “The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up,” Marie Kondo gave us a transformative method for decluttering our homes. Based on feng shui principles and Kondo’s own study of organization, the KonMari Method has led thousands of devotees to new heights of tidiness. Kondo instructs participants to assess each of their possessions, item by item, category by category, and then dispose of those that do not provide joy. It’s touted as a simple, though not easy, guide to long-term organization.

What would happen if this approach were applied to your calendar? Entrepreneur Christina Wallace calls her 10-month experiment in doing so an “unqualified success.” Most of us could benefit from trimming our jampacked schedules. Those various calendars synced to our phone, each emitting noisy reminders about the upcoming hour’s plans, aren’t exactly harbingers of harmony. Get a jump-start on your organization resolution by applying the KonMari Method to your calendar.

**Step 1: Assess** First, envision the life you want to lead. Next, assess all the items listed on your calendar within a two-month period. Organize each commitment according to categories — social, work-related, doctor’s appointments, etc. Be thorough. Including each commitment, no matter how minor, is the key to this process.

**Step 2: Joy Test** Do these commitments bring you joy? Are they part of your ideal life? When you look at “Lunch date with Margot” from last week,

are you reminded of her unfriendly comments about your waiter and her negative attitude toward your renovation ideas? Consider each commitment and its impact on your joy.

Of course, not all commitments will live up to the joy standard. You may not love your annual check-up, but it is important for your health. When you encounter non-negotiable items like these, consider the long-term impact they have on your well-being.

**Step 3: Discard** Put an end to commitments that are not bringing you joy. This might mean having tough conversations with clients or friends. No one said the KonMari Method is easy. Decluttering entails getting rid of items that do not pass the joy test.

**Step 4: Apply!** Follow through. Cancel commitments and long-standing obligations that are not benefiting your life. Have the difficult conversation. Apply the joy test as new commitments come up.

By considering each commitment and its impact on your life, you will make room for those that bring you joy. To read more about the KonMari Method, check out Kondo’s “The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up” and its companion book, “Spark Joy.”



## Easy Holiday Party Cheese Fondue

### Ingredients

- ¾ cup dry white wine
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 (8-ounce) package sliced Swiss cheese
- 1 clove garlic
- Salt to taste
- Foods to dip (apple slices, bread cubes, roasted vegetables, etc.)

### Directions

1. In a large bowl, whisk together wine and cornstarch.
  2. Chop cheese slices into small, uniform pieces.
  3. Rub clove of garlic all over the sides and bottom of a heavy-bottomed pot, then discard.
  4. Heat wine mixture over medium-low heat in the pot until thick and bubbling. Add some cheese
  5. Season with salt and serve immediately. Keep pot on low heat to keep the fondue dippable.
- and slowly whisk. When nearly smooth, add more cheese and whisk gently. Repeat until all cheese is melted. If mixture seems too tight, add 1 tablespoon wine.

Have a  
**LAUGH!**



*"This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury and elder abuse. It is not intended to be legal advice. Every case is different."*

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Page 1

The Best Holiday Traditions

Page 2

Stop Wasting Gift Wrap!

Page 2

The 7 Biggest Mistakes That Can Ruin Your  
 Accident Claim

Page 3

Go KonMari on Your Calendar

Page 3

Easy Holiday Party Cheese Fondue

Page 4

Evolution of a Christmas Icon



# THE ORIGIN OF SANTA CLAUS

Santa Claus wasn't always a husky, omniscient gift-giver who circumnavigates the world once a year, propelled by flying caribou and backed by an army of friendly elves. Though the historical St. Nicholas had many of the same generous tendencies as our contemporary "King in the North," he lacked a high-tech sleigh that could exceed the speed of light. To be exact, St. Nicholas was a renowned Bishop of Myra — an old Roman town near modern-day Demre, Turkey — way back around A.D. 300.

Even before he became the bishop, St. Nicholas was known for his generosity. The most famous tale of his charity involved a poor man who could not afford a proper dowry to marry off his three daughters. In those days, this generally meant the daughters would remain unmarried, making it likely that they'd fall into prostitution. Wanting to help, but also wanting to spare the family embarrassment, St. Nicholas traveled to the house at night and threw three purses packed with gold coins through the window.

After his death, St. Nicholas became a beloved patron saint, but during the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century, the respect that many Catholic saints received diminished, and his popularity dwindled across Europe.

One area where he remained popular was the Netherlands. There, he lived on as "Sinterklaas," a mythical figure who went house to house on the eve of St. Nicholas's nameday, December 5, leaving treats and gifts for children. Sinterklaas traditionally wore red bishop's clothes and employed elves, and he traveled with horses that could walk across rooftops.

When the Dutch emigrated in droves to America during the 17th and 18th centuries, they brought this kindly icon to the new colonies. Over time, notably through Clement Moore's 1822 poem "A Visit From St. Nicholas" and a famous 1930s depiction by Coca-Cola ad illustrator Haddon Sundblom, Santa evolved into the figure we see today.