


Screen alternatives for Thanksgiving

 screenagersmovie.com/tech-talk-tuesdays/screen-alternatives-for-thanksgiving

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Thanksgiving is this week, and I have some ideas about how to support more face-to-face interactions and fewer retreats into all our individual devices. Rarely do I say something so prescriptive, but I'm taking a leap. I recommend for Thanksgiving that all personal portable devices go into a big basket. Also, I recommend saying that all other screens are shut down for the day (except possibly for a TV if you watch sports that day, and a shared computer, for a reason I will explain below).

So, here are some fun ideas and I am jazzed to get to do these with my family in 2 days!

First, what a perfect time to look at all those wild and crazy photos you've taken throughout the year and to give thanks to the experiences that have transpired. It is also a nice time to look at pictures that are actually on photographic paper. What about taking that tub of photos that you've never put into an album, and dump them on a table like you would a puzzle, and then everyone casually hunts for treasures. And if you don't have access to paper photos, here is why I said one shared computer could be OK—to look at photos together.

Another wonderful thing to consider is putting on music and getting people to demonstrate the dance moves from their "time." Let's undo the sad reality that in the U.S., the cross-generational bonding activity of dancing is pretty much reserved only for weddings. But we can change that, at least for one day. How about some square dancing (I loved when we did that in my elementary school), the Macarena, a few Ballroom steps, or some disco moves (which is making a comeback these days).

What about cloud gazing? This [TED Radio podcast](#) is about Gavin Pretor-Pinney's Cloud Appreciation Society and all the joy and calm that comes from marveling at the clouds above, whether alone or with others. I am not sure if this would work in Seattle where I live because the sky is often one giant grey cloud, but I am motivated to do this on Thanksgiving.

Another idea for connecting with people and nature is to go outside and walk to a neighbor's home to say thank you—thanking them for whatever you can think of—the key is the act of appreciation that we have wonderful people in our community and we are lucky to have them. I plan to take my family out on a walk and indeed do this. What a great way to build community—and even if they are out for the day, leave a note. Think how happy Mister Rogers would be... and you could come back and together [watch the trailer](#) to the record-setting documentary about him.

Board games are always fun and such a forgotten pastime. Monopoly has just released a Millennial edition where players collect "experience points" by visiting places like a meditation retreat or a 3-day concert. The player who collects the most experiences, not money, wins.

However, it is so popular that it might be impossible to get for Thanksgiving. Consider stopping by a neighbor and seeing if they have a game you could borrow.

For more inspiration check out this [list of boardgames I compiled last holiday season](#).

For this TTT, talk about what offline activities your family likes to do during the holiday season. Here are some questions to get the conversation started:

- What games did you play as a kid that you would like to share with your kids?
- Ask any guests or family if they have a bin of pictures they might want to contribute for a “picture activity.”
- What people are you thankful for in your community? How about something in nature?
- Why do we not have more opportunities for people of all ages to dance together? It is so fun!

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