



MENTAL HEALTH TIPS TO SURVIVE CHRISTMAS



REACH OUT

Christmas is a time of joy but for many can be the darkest and hardest time of the year. If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed, don't be afraid to ask for help. While everyone around you seems to be happy, you may feel persistently stressed or anxious, sad or even hopeless. Find someone to talk to; it could be a friend, partner, family member, colleague, doctor, therapist or a helpline. There is always someone who will listen. Sharing your thoughts and feelings can really help free your mind and unlock options that may help.



BUDGET

Christmas time can be a very expensive time of year. People often feel under pressure to buy presents, attend events and spend more money than they can afford. Make a Christmas budget, factor in the significant things such as family outings and stick to it. Come January you will be glad.



BE MINDFUL OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Christmas can be a time of overindulgence in food and alcohol. Socialising is often based around alcohol and the pub. Alcohol, although it makes some users feel relaxed, drinking large amounts can lead to low mood and irritability, it can contribute to a loss of inhibitions, conflict and misunderstanding. Try to be mindful of the amount you may consume and to be aware of how you may feel the following day.



SLEEP

The Christmas season can be hectic meaning our sleep pattern can be thrown out of sync. We cannot function effectively without sleep - it helps to repair and restore our brains and bodies, and is vital for maintaining good mental health. Ongoing sleep disturbance can lead to tiredness, irritability and difficulty concentrating. Try to stick to your normal sleeping pattern so that you have the energy for the hustle and bustle of the festive season.



NOURISH YOUR BODY

When it comes to mental health, what you eat can make a difference to how you feel. A diet rich in foods like fruits, vegetables, wholegrain cereals, nuts and seeds can help protect your mental health. Making healthier food choices will ultimately improve your physical and mental wellbeing, keeping the everything in moderation mindset over the festive period will stand to you, removing that sluggish feeling in January.



BE MINDFUL

Mindfulness is simply paying attention to whatever is happening in the present moment and experiencing it without judgement. We are either in the past or the future, but rarely in the now. Savour the moments and memories made over the festive season. Be present in that moment and stop worrying about the future.



EXERCISE

Being physically active can enhance your mood, reduce stress and anxiety, encourage the release of endorphins and improve self-esteem. Keeping active over the festive period will help protect both your physical health and your mental health. Regular exercise will help you sleep and relax, look and feel better. Get outside, breath in some fresh air feel it deep within your lungs, you will feel better for it.



HAVE COMPASSION FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Being considerate, generous and kind can make anyone's day. The true meaning of Christmas is to remove suffering by sharing and giving, having fun and spending time with the most important people in your life. With 1 in 4 people experiencing a mental illness at some point in their life, there is bound to be someone you know who is not feeling festive. Reach out to them, ask them how they are. You could be the one reason they do not feel alone over the festive season.

