

'It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas'

PART ONE

12 SURVIVAL TIPS FOR CHRISTMAS.

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year to unwind and indulge in your favourite Christmas movies and make memories. However a recent study by Mind (A UK based organisation that provides research and support on mental health) has found 81% of people find Christmas stressful, 60% of people have experienced panic attacks and 76% of people struggle to sleep at Christmas. We have therefore designed 12 Survival tips for Christmas to provide you with useful strategies for a healthy, happy Christmas.

1. Take 15 to yourself.

Allow yourself to take some time out during the Christmas season. According to research, 1 in 10 people feel unable to cope at this time of year. If you are feeling drained or overwhelmed, take time to restore your energy with your favourite book, podcast or a walk. If you are worried about your mental health consider talking to your doctor.

2. Stay active

Keeping active at Christmas time can be difficult due to social commitments and the uninspiring cold, wet weather. However, research has shown that being active can boost your mood, increase your energy levels and help you to cope with Christmas-stress. Try to aim for 30-40 minutes of moderate activity every day - it can be as simple as getting out in the fresh air for a brisk walk. Christmas shopping - whether you love it or hate it - can also add steps to your day. If you have a gym membership, make use of the empty gym before it becomes overcrowded in January.

3. Sleep.

Lack of sleep may leave you feeling overwhelmed and further sleep deprivation can lead to mood and behaviour changes. Your sleeping routine maybe altered during the holiday season but try stick to your normal routine as much as you can. To help improve your sleep this festive season consider having a relaxing bath before bed, and reduce phone scrolling before bed.

4. Plan ahead

Cooking, shopping and parties can take over your calendar.

Planning ahead can be a good strategy not only to make things run smoothly but also to help you relax. Research indicates that planning and knowing what to do next can put your mind at ease. Making shopping and to do lists can be a helpful way to get organised as well as reduce impulse buying.

5. Social Interaction

Catching up with family and friends is the theme of Christmas, however this is not the case for everyone. Research found that 41% of people feel lonely during Christmas period. Remember those who you haven't connected with for a while and this Christmas give them a call.

6. Everything in moderation

Christmas can often become all about food and indulging, which can very easily develop into a habit. Keep the balance, focussing on maintaining your exercise regime wherever possible and maintaining a wholesome and nutritious diet, allowing for treats and enjoyment, too.

Check into our next blog to get part 2 of our 12 survival tips for Christmas.

If you are worried about your physical or mental health this festive season talk to a professional and/or seek advice from your GP.

For more information on mental health see links below:

Mind UK:

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Contact number: 0300 123 3393

Text: 86463

Mental health Ireland

Email: Info@mentalhealthireland.ie

Contact number: 01 284 1166

Website links

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

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