

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

PART TWO

12 SURVIVAL TIPS FOR CHRISTMAS.

Welcome back to our second part of '12 survival tips for Christmas' blog.

Christmas can be very exciting with chai lattes, catch ups, presents, fluffy socks, memories and so much more, but it can quickly become overwhelming. Remember to take stock and to take care of your mental and physical health throughout the Christmas season. Part 2 of our 12 survival tips for Christmas will hopefully give you some more ideas of how to cope this season

1. Drink less and gain more

Alcohol can play a big part in Christmas celebration, therefore be Alcohol aware this Christmas and know the units that you're drinking. One alcohol unit is measured as 10ml (or 8g of pure alcohol) and it is recommended that men should not exceed over 4 units a day, and women 3 a day. Chronic alcohol consumption can affect your mood, physical health and enhance anxiety. (Drinkaware.co.uk)

Social events can be a challenge for anyone trying to drink less. Studies report that making drinking a choice, not a chore is the way forward i.e. instead of saying 'I can't drink tonight' say 'I'm choosing not to have a drink tonight' can have an empowering effect.

If you are planning to have a few drinks over the holiday season keep hydrated between drinks and try eat before you go out.

Lastly remember don't drink and drive and even if you feel okay the next morning, you could still be over the limit. Your body gets rid of about one standard drink per hour, so do the maths before you get behind the wheel.

2. Catch up

Face to face socialising has many benefits, one being reducing cortisol which is responsible for your stress levels. Catching up with friends and family over a coffee, walk, or even shopping can have a further positive effect on your mental health this Christmas.

3. Eat well

Food and drink is a huge part of Christmas, with food occasions providing enjoyment, satisfaction and social benefits. Our diets plays an important role in how we feel and can affect our energy levels, mood, brain function and your immune system. Your immune system can often become suppressed over this festive season so consider enjoying healthy snacks between meals to keep colds and flu at bay and keep you at your best this Christmas.

4. Stay hydrated

Increased alcohol consumption, which is generally associated with this time of year, can increase dehydration. On the occasions where you chose to have a drink, make sure you drink enough water to stay hydrated. Staying hydrated will help you stay alert throughout the day and aid with digestion.

5. Waste

Hundreds of kilograms of food waste is created in homes across the country each year. Buying less food, or being more selective about the products you chose to buy (Will anyone REALLY eat the third Christmas pudding?), freezing leftovers or incorporating leftovers into recipes (Boxing Day bubble and squeak, anyone?) can help you to reduce your food waste.

6. Make memories and be present.

Make memories and put the phone down, be present and most importantly enjoy yourself. Try not to get discouraged if things do not go as planned, and remember that comparison is the thief of joy – live in your own moment and don't compare to what others might be doing around you.. Try and remove feelings of guilt associated with typically unhealthy behaviours, and if you are lucky enough to get the chance to put your feet up in front of the fire in amongst all the mayhem, enjoy the break!

Have a happy and a healthy 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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