

Be mindful of unrealistic expectations

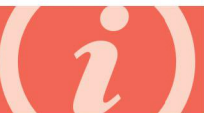


It can be easy to set overly ambitious goals during the festive season.

Think about whether what you are setting out to do is realistic and achievable - this could help you to avoid overstressing yourself emotionally and financially.

- Are you choosing the most valuable and rewarding things to devote your energy to?
- Are others people's expectations influencing your decisions?
- Are you comparing your experience with anyone else's?
- Are you getting caught up in thoughts of what Christmas *should* be like?

Avoiding Overload



Learn to delegate

Christmas traditions and routines can be difficult to break away from - we can find ourselves taking on a lot of tasks leading up to the big day and expecting a lot from others. Try using the list opposite to help you to prioritise and work out which tasks you can delegate.

How to ask for help

Instead of handing out jobs at random, try to work to everyone's strengths and interests.

Praise as you delegate, rather than giving orders. For example:

"I love your neat handwriting, would you write out some gift tags for me?"

Enlist the help of little hands

Children might like to help - to give them a sense of importance and responsibility. Try offering them small jobs to do to keep them entertained such as writing cards, wrapping small presents, or setting the table.

(If you don't have willing helpers, try not to force the subject - this could lead to unnecessary stress)

My festive tasks

Things I need to do:



Tasks to share

Things I can ask others to help with:



Top Tip

It's OK to say no!



Practise being assertive and straightforward when communicating with others.

If you feel that people are making unreasonable demands of you, express this calmly and (if at all possible) try to work with them to negotiate ways of making things more manageable.

Avoid unhealthy coping strategies



It can be tempting to hit the booze a little hard when you're stressed. Remember that if you are already feeling low, drinking heavily can make you feel worse.

Be aware that drinking can also have a negative impact on your judgment. This may mean that you end up behaving aggressively.

Top Tip

Mindfulness 54321



Make a point of taking a few moments out to engage your senses and appreciate the unique sounds, tastes, and smells of Christmas.

- Notice 5 objects, observe their shape, colour and how they relate to the space
- Now try to listen to 4 different sounds
- Focus your attention on 3 separate sensations in your body – the air temperature, the feeling of the ground under your feet
- Notice 2 festive smells
- And finally focus on 1 taste – a good excuse for another mince pie!

Maintain a sleep routine



With all the parties, family get-togethers, and additional travel, it can be difficult to stick to a regular sleep routine.

A lack of sleep can have a serious effect on our brain's ability to function; concentration becomes difficult and our attention span shortens. Even having one night of little or no sleep can lead to irritability, moodiness and forgetfulness.

It will be easier to cope with the challenges of the festive season if you can keep as close to your usual bedtime schedule as possible.

Top Tip

Count the positives



Bring to mind ten things you are grateful for, counting them on your fingers. Don't stop until you reach ten!

Useful resources

Emotional Support

The Samaritans provide 24-hour, confidential support to people experiencing distress or despair.

08457 90 90 90

jo@samaritans.org

Find out more:

www.samaritans.org.uk

Anxiety & Stress

www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk - search for anxiety

Support for men

CALM provide support and advice for men:

www.calmzone.net

Debt

Insight works in partnership with PayPlan, a leading UK debt solution provider.

Call the Insight Wellbeing at Work helpline or visit the Wellbeing Portal for more information.

In the event of an emergency or if you are unable to keep yourself safe, you should contact your GP, local Accident and Emergency Department or call 999