

Keep Calm at Christmas

Looking after your mental wellbeing over the seasonal period

Christmas and New Year can be a difficult time for many of us. It brings pressures and problems to bear. Here is some advice for Christmas and New Year.

Be careful about comparing yourself to others at Christmas.

Unrealistic media and advertising versions of other people's festive celebrations can make us feel less positive. Be realistic about your own expectations. Make plans for how you will spend the time over Christmas. Build time in for yourself to treat yourself whether it be reading a new book, going out for coffee or a meal.

Participate in your local community or social groups

Christmas can be a time of increased loneliness and isolation. Many organisations offer support at Christmas and finding out what is available in your local area may be helpful. Local libraries, community centres, social media and newspapers are good sources of information. Volunteering is one good way of reducing loneliness and having a sense of purpose if you would otherwise be spending Christmas alone. Try to connect into local groups and not spend too much time alone. You might like to go to community Christmas lunches which happen across the city.

Connect with other people in similar situations

Don't allow your normal routines to be pushed out of place. Try to go to your regular support groups such as SMART, NA and AA over the holiday period for support. You could even consider going to extra meetings.

Plan to keep things problem free

Think about what people or situations may trigger negative feelings or behaviours and figure out ways to avoid them. If going to a New Year's party might be a trigger, decide to just stop by on New Year's Day and see the same people. Try to avoid people or places that may bring back memories of unhappy experiences or that might cause you to think about misusing substances. If you are unable to avoid these, think about making a plan ahead of time to cope with them as well as you possibly can. Your Key Worker can help you with this.

Keep active

Keeping physically active can help with your mood as well as improve your health. Try to schedule in some time every day for walking, swimming or gardening or whatever activity you prefer. These will all help you to sleep better too.









Don't give up.

If you have a moment of frustration or sadness then let it pass and go on. Just because you feel bad for a few minutes doesn't mean you give up the rest of the day and use substances to deal with it. Try to let these emotions just pass through you. Remember, no emotion lasts forever, even though it might feel that way at the time. Use distractions if possible to turn your attention elsewhere. Use the helplines on this leaflet if you need to. These services understand how difficult this time of year can be and are ready to offer support to those who need it.

Telephone: 01325 731 160

Web: humankindcharity.org.uk

useful phone numbers for help and support over the Christmas AND NEW YEAR period

	116 123 – Freephone number 24 hours a day every day
	0300 304 7000 between 4:30pm and 10:30pm each evening. The Saneline helpline is a specialist mental health helpline
	01722 580171 The Trussell Trust runs a network, giving emergency food and support to people in crisis across the UK.
	0800 4 70 80 90 Open 24 hours every day Free confidential helpline for older people.. Call Silver Line for information, friendship and advice at any time of the day or night.
	0808 808 4994 A confidential helpline service for young people under 25 who need help, but don't know where to turn. You can call The Mix if you are feeling low, anxious or lonely or want to talk through something that is upsetting you like relationship difficulties, family problems or drug use.
	0800 068 41 41 HopelineUK is a confidential support and advice service for young people under the age of 35 who may be having thoughts of suicide..
	0800 585858 CALM offers support to men in the UK, of any age, who are feeling down or in crisis..
	0808 808 4000 A debt advice charity run by the Money Advice Trust offering a free and confidential debt advice service

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