

## Managing Stress during the Festive Season

The festive season can bring added stress with shopping, parties, and entertaining. By following a few simple tips, you can reduce the pressure and enjoy the holidays more fully, embracing the season with a sense of balance and calm.



**Acknowledge Your Feelings:** This time of year may bring up emotions related to loss or change. It's completely normal to feel sadness or grief, and it's OK to express those feelings. You don't have to force yourself to be happy just because it's the holidays.

**Reach Out:** If you're feeling isolated, connecting with others can make a difference. Whether it's volunteering or getting involved in community events, social interactions can offer support, companionship, and help lift your mood.

**Be Realistic:** Holidays don't have to be perfect or look like they did last year. Families change, traditions evolve—be open to creating new rituals and embracing the season as it is.

**Let Go of Expectations:** Accept your family and friends for who they are, even if they don't meet all your expectations. If there's tension, it's okay to set aside grievances for a later time. Remember, others may also be feeling the effects of holiday stress.

**Stick to a Budget:** Before you start shopping, decide on a budget and stick to it. Remember, the holidays aren't about extravagant gifts. The greatest gift is the time and care you share.

**Plan Ahead:** Set aside specific days for your activities, and plan your menus and shopping lists ahead of time to avoid last-minute stress. Don't hesitate to ask for help with party prep and clean-up—sharing the load makes a big difference.

**Learn to Say No:** Overcommitting can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. It's okay to say no when you need to. If you can't, try to free up time by removing something else from your agenda.

**Maintain Healthy Habits:** Indulging too much only adds to stress. Eat a healthy snack before parties to avoid overindulging, make time for physical activity, and prioritise sleep to keep your energy levels up.

**Take Time for Yourself:** Make space for a little personal time, even if it's just 15 minutes alone. Disconnecting from distractions can clear your mind, calm your breathing, and help restore your inner balance.

**Seek Professional Help if Needed:** If you find yourself feeling persistently overwhelmed, irritable, or physically unwell, don't hesitate to reach out to a doctor or mental health professional for support.

To book an appointment with one of our counsellors, call or scan the QR Code



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