

A Mindful Guide to looking after yourself this holiday season



How to help yourself or someone you know this holiday season

The holiday period is upon us once more. It is a time to connect with family and friends and while this may be an enjoyable time for some it may also leave us with feelings of sadness or loneliness. We may have feelings of excitement and joy, but these may be mixed with conflicting feelings of pressure and stress.

Self-care, mindfulness and creating your own rituals are important at this time of year. We encourage you to make space for yourself this holiday season. Here are steps to looking after yourself that may help:

Keep it simple

- Do something you enjoy
- Do less and enjoy more
- It's okay to say "no" when you need to
- Make the most of the holidays by saying "yes" to activities and people you truly want to spend time with.

Self-care

- Self-care will look different for everyone and can include taking time to go for a walk, swim, play with a pet, listen to your favourite music, read a book, create a regular sleep routine and set aside time for yourself.
- Be kind and compassionate to yourself too.

Share memories

- Sharing memories of the past with stories, photos, videos, songs and special recipes.
- Coming together and sharing our memories with others strengthens our connections.
- Share your memories and continue to create new memories for the future.

Revise your plan

- Plan ahead by talking to those affected and remember, there is no rule book.
- Be flexible to schedules.
- Create new traditions that feel right for you and your family and friends
- Have an exit strategy
- Christmas catch-ups can be a mixed bag of joy and stress. Protect yourself against the stress by having a strategy. Plan how you will respond to sensitive issues and how you can exist if you want to.



Be present

- Tune into your five senses, be aware of what you see, hear, taste, smell and touch.
- Choose activities you find relaxing, unplug from electronic devices, go outdoors, take a walk or share delicious food with your family or friends.
- Make Christmas about being present instead of the presents this year!

Reach out

- Remember to support others who may be experiencing a tough time.
- Checking in, can be as simple as asking how they're going and letting them know that you are there for them.
- Stay in touch and if you are concerned, share emotional and mental health supports
- Mental health support is available. For information and organisations that can support please visit www.mackillopinstitute.org.au/resources/