

Mental Health and Resilience...

As we move into the winter months and get ever closer to Christmas and New Year, it can affect your mental health.

Here are some tips for coping during Christmas

If you find Christmas a difficult time of year, this page has some tips to help you cope:

- **Be gentle, generous and patient with yourself**
 - It's ok to prioritise what's best for you, even if others don't seem to understand.
 - Think about what you need and how you might be able to get it.
 - Consider talking to someone you trust about what you need to cope.
- **Plan ahead**

Think about what might be difficult about Christmas for you, and if there's anything that might help you cope. It might be useful to write this down. For example:

 - If you sometimes experience flashbacks, panic attacks or dissociation, make a note of what helps during these moments, and keep it with you.
 - If you're going to be somewhere unfamiliar for Christmas, think about what you need to help you cope. Are there things you can bring to make you feel more comfortable? Or is there somewhere you can go to take a break?
 - Certain places may feel very uncomfortable for you, for example if they bring back difficult memories. Could you plan to spend less time in difficult places, or not go at all? Are there any reasonable excuses for you to stay away?
 - Think about whether you really need to do things if you're not looking forward to them. Can you do them differently or for less time?
 - Make a list of any services that you might need and their Christmas opening hours. Our page of useful contacts has some suggestions.
 - If you're worried about feeling lonely or isolated this Christmas, think of some ways to help pass the time. For example, this might be doing something creative or spending time in nature. See our pages on relaxation for more ideas.
 - If you are in hospital or a care home, see what activities might be running over Christmas that you might want to take part in.
 - If you can't be with the people you want to see in person, you could arrange a phone or video call to catch up with them on the day. Or try to arrange a visit around Christmas, if there is a time when it's possible to meet.
 - Try to plan something nice to do after Christmas. Having something to look forward to next year could make a real difference.
- **Manage relationships**
 - If other people's questions are difficult, you could think of some answers in advance, so you're not caught off guard. For example, about your plans or how you're doing.
 - Think about how to end difficult conversations. It's ok to tell someone you don't want to talk about something, or to change the subject. It might help to practise what you'll say.

- Suggest an activity or an easy way to move on if you want to help end an unwanted conversation. For example, this could be playing a game, or taking a screen break if you're on a video call.
- If other people don't seem to understand how you're feeling, you could share this information with them. You could also think about writing down how you're feeling and sharing this with them if conversations are difficult.
- **Look after yourself**
 - Set a 'start' and 'finish' time for what you count as Christmas. Remind yourself that it won't last forever.
 - Set your boundaries. Say no to things that aren't helpful for you.
 - Let yourself experience your own feelings. Even if they don't match what's going on around you, they're still real and valid.
 - Take time out. Do something to forget that it's Christmas or distract yourself. For example, you could watch a film or read a book that's set in the summer. Or you could try learning a new skill.
 - Let yourself have the things you need. For example, if you need to take a break instead of doing an activity or need a little bit of quiet time.
 - If you can't avoid something difficult, plan something for yourself afterwards to help reduce the stress or distress you might feel.
- **Talking to other people**
 - Let people know you're struggling. It can often feel like it's just you when it's not. See our page on opening up to others about your mental health for tips.
 - It doesn't have to be people who are already in your life. You could join an online community to talk others who have similar experiences to yours. Mind's online community Side by Side is a safe place to connect with others who understand what you're going through.
 - Tell people what they can stop, start or continue doing to help you. For example, you could let them know any activities you'd like to be involved in, and what they can do to support you during Christmas. Or you could tell them any questions or topics that you find hard to discuss, so they can avoid asking about them.
 - You don't have to justify yourself to others. But you might feel pressured to, especially if someone asks a lot of questions. It could help to let them know that certain situations are difficult for you and tell them what they can do to help. It might also help to tell them that you understand they may see things in a different way.
 - You might not be able to make others understand. That's OK. It's not your responsibility to convince other people or get their permission to look after yourself.
- **Get support**

If you're struggling this Christmas, you may want to find support for your mental health. There are a few ways that you can do this:

 - Call Samaritans on 116 123 (freephone). They're always open. They have a Welsh language line too.
 - Text SHOUT to 85258. This is a free 24/7 crisis text service run by Shout.
 - Visit our useful contacts page for a list of organisations who can support your mental health or help with practical problems.

Segment taken from Mind – [Christmas and Mental Health](#)

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Segment taken from NSPCC Learning – [What is safeguarding?](#)

British Values are defined as...

Democracy

A culture built upon freedom and equality, where everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities.

The rule of law

The need for rules to make a happy, safe and secure environment to live and work.

Individual liberty

Protection of your rights and the rights of others around you.

Mutual respect & tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

Understanding that we all don't share the same beliefs and values. Respecting those values, ideas and beliefs of others whilst not imposing our own onto them.



Image taken from Google

Radicalisation & Extremism

ADVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

We appreciate that explaining terrorism and extremism to young people can be difficult. Counter Terrorism Policing has provided information and guidance to educate and inform at school or at home.

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies. If you are worried someone close to you is becoming radicalised act early and seek help. The sooner you reach out, the quicker we can protect the person you care about from being groomed and exploited by extremists.

Police forces across the country have specially trained Prevent officers who work alongside other organisations through a Home Office programme called Prevent to help people vulnerable to radicalisation move away from violent extremism. We are here to listen and offer help and advice. Receiving support is voluntary.

Friends and family are best placed to spot the signs, so trust your instincts and tell us your concerns in confidence.

We recognise that this is a difficult time for parents and guardians and that the Coronavirus is having a significant impact on young people and families across the world.

We can help if you act early. You won't be wasting our time and you won't ruin lives, but you might save them.

To find out more about how to help someone close to you visit actearly.uk

Segment taken from Counter Terrorism Policing – [Advice for Young People](#)

If you need any help or advice, please contact –

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