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# **Feeling better during the festive season**



**Able Futures, delivering the  
Access to Work Mental Health Support Service**



# In this session

1. Why festive seasons may feel hard to cope with
2. Common struggles at Christmas
3. What we can do to feel better
4. Five ways to support your mental wellbeing
5. How Able Futures can support you and your staff at any time during the year
6. Your questions



# Feelings about festivities

Adverts on TV show people feeling merry and bright throughout December and into the New Year. But what if this is not your experience of Christmas?

What if you are feeling under the weather since the clocks turned back and the days get shorter?

What if you're worried about money and are finding it difficult to finance festivities?

What if you are experiencing relationship issues or loneliness, are worried about family members or stressed about other issues?



# \_Common struggles at Christmas

\_Stress

\_Loneliness

\_Too much to do

\_Over-indulgence and addiction

\_Relationship issues

\_Money worries



# What can I do to feel better?

Take time to consider what kind of festive season you really want. Knowing what we wish for can help us put in place plans to help us create the sort of Christmas we really want, so we aren't confused by the pictures of other people's ideas about Christmas which bombard us.

Look after yourself. Set time aside every day to nourish yourself. This could be as simple as going for a walk, eating some fruit or making sure you set yourself up for a good night's sleep with a bedtime routine.



# What can I do to feel better?

This is a great time of year to use your time or money to support others. Research shows that people feel better when they have helped someone else. Help put a smile on someone else's face by giving your time and energy to support them at Christmas.

Set yourself a little challenge to learn something or do something new this festive season. It can feel good to stretch yourself and could be something like learning Sudoku, taking a break from social media or watching a TED talk. What ideas can you come up with?

# \_Your ideas for ways to relax

- \_Walking the dog
- \_Go to the gym
- \_Switch off from technology
- \_Take a bath
- \_Read a good book
- \_Get up at a regular time, go to bed early
- \_Drawing
- \_Feed the birds
- \_Yoga and tai-chi
- \_Listen to music
- \_Take a sofa and TV day
- \_Gardening
- \_Cooking
- \_Learn to say no
- \_Practice mindfulness
- \_Gratitude
- \_Make a cup of herbal tea / hot chocolate
- \_Talk about your feelings



# \_What can I do to feel better?

\_Be gentle with yourself. Many times, we are our own worst enemy by expecting perfection and putting ourselves under pressure when nobody else expects us to be doing anything unreasonable. Try to think about Christmas realistically and don't beat yourself up if things don't turn out the way you thought they "should do". You will do your best. Don't let your inner critic get you down. Speak kindly to yourself!





# What can I do to feel better?

- Connect with someone. You are not alone because many people struggle with Christmas. If you can reach out to friend or family for support. If that's not possible or appropriate, then call to talk to someone on the Samaritans helpline.
- Apply for support for your mental wellbeing from Able Futures who can help you through Christmas and into a healthier and happier New Year.



# Five ways to wellbeing



**Connect**



**Give**



**Notice**



**Be active**



**Learn**



# Support available from Able Futures

Able Futures delivers the **Access to Work Mental Health Support Service** in England, Scotland and Wales, on behalf of the **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)**.



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