

'Tis the season to be jolly?

The holiday season is packed with expectations, with all the socialising, entertaining and gift giving.

Many people feel under pressure to have a 'picture perfect Christmas' and stay full of good cheer...



"I'm having all the fun."

"Family is everything."

"It's the most wonderful time of year."

"Magical memories are made of this."



But beneath the smiles and Santa hats, many of us are actually feeling something very different...

Overwhelm

Loneliness

Stress

"Everyone seems to be having a great time. Why not me?"

"This is the first Christmas since my mum died. I miss her."

Regret

Disappointment

Disconnection

"I've had to borrow money to buy my kids presents this year."

"I don't fit it in with my friends. I feel like we're drifting apart."

"I'm letting people down."

"My long-term relationship just ended unexpectedly."

"I've lost my job and I'm feeling so overwhelmed."

Shame

Sadness

"I'm just feeling so lonely."



Trying to conceal these feelings can only add to the pressure.

But there are some ways of coping. Find out over the page...

Give yourself the gift of care

For many of us, Christmas can sometimes be a strain. We hope these tips help in looking after yourself and your loved ones this holiday season.



Take time out

You can't pour from an empty cup, so **don't forget to take a break**. Put aside some time for your hobby or to do something you find relaxing.

Try to eat with your mental health in mind

Staying hydrated and eating mood-boosting foods can have a positive impact on how we feel.



Avoid comparison

Comparing ourselves to others can make us feel not good enough. **Limit using social media if you need to**, and remember it doesn't show you the whole picture.

Start a conversation

Unexpected **moments of connection can improve our mood**. Just saying hello to a stranger or wishing them happy Christmas can go a long way.

Reconnect

We can all lose touch with friends over time, but **it's never too late to reconnect**. Every Christmas, Said sends voice notes to his friends.

"I'll always ask about their lives and let them know that I'm thinking of them. Giving something to other people, that's the magic of Christmas."

Stay active

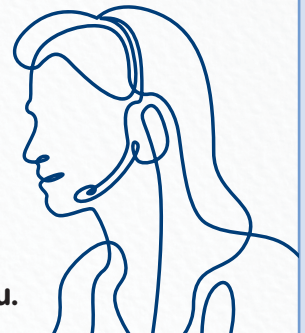
Exercise releases hormones that boosts happy feelings – why not try dancing, cycling, going for a walk or playing a game in the backyard.



Crisis Supporters like Said (pronounced 'Psy-eed') are always there for you.

Reach out

Whether it's 3am on Christmas Day or 11pm on New Year's Eve, **Lifeline is there every day and every night of the year – ready to listen and support you**.



If you'd like to access more tips and self help tools to combat loneliness, please visit www.lifeline.org.au/holiday-loneliness. Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling 13 11 14, texting 0477 13 11 14, or visiting www.lifeline.org.au/gethelp.