



Wellbeing Christmas

It's Christmas...

Christmas is going to feel a bit different for us all this year. Many of us aren't going to be able to be with family or friends in the way we might normally be. And then of course we are taking with us into the holiday period all the stress, strain, tiredness, and anxieties that have built up over the months of the pandemic. So, to help us rest, renew and feel re-energised, here's some simple wellbeing tips to help us during the next few weeks.

1. Lean into the difference and create some new traditions and memories – Yes things are going to feel different this Christmas, but that gives us a great opportunity to develop some new ways of doing things and maybe some new traditions.

2. Reach for the satsumas! – We have learnt that too much sugar and overindulging in the wrong kind of stuff builds up in our bodies – it has a toxicity. It changes our mood and makes us sluggish as well as not being good for our health generally. So let's try not to overindulge on all the rich food and drink but reach for the fruit sometimes instead.

3. Be present – We can probably all identify a moment when somebody we were talking to wasn't really 'present' with us. When this happens it can leave us feeling a bit cold and a bit fed up with the other person. It's because being truly present with people is how we build connection, find greater meaning and also experience positive feelings about ourselves and others. When that doesn't happen it feels off. So let's try and be truly 'present' with those around us, and put down the phones this Christmas.

4. Take 5 – If possible, plan in some regular '5 minute-breather' spaces during the day when you can do something that enables you to recentre and regroup. It might be as simple as stepping outside, or doing breathing exercises, or taking a few minutes to look out of the window and observe nature. Nothing complicated, nothing heavy, just simple and easy to achieve 5 minute-breathers.

5. Get some fresh air – This year we have learnt the value of being outside haven't we. We've discovered that open spaces impact our mood, our creativity and our wellbeing generally. Over the holiday, plan to do some daily walks in the local area. Make it a bit more

fun by doing a 'Christmas lights competition' working out which of the neighbours have put on the best light show this year!

6. Forgive yourself – Things won't always go right over the holiday. We will make mistakes and things won't go how we want them to. At times like this our internal voice of self-judgement can really kick into action. But if we keep a short account with ourselves, spot the self-judgement statements and stop them in their tracks and forgive ourselves we will be carrying out a huge act of self-care. Doing this can also really reduce anxiety and depression too.

7. Make a list and have some fun – We need to all have a good rest over this holiday period but it's good to remember that we also renew our energy by doing stuff that brings us life and is fun too - including helping other people. So try making a list of some of the things you'd like to do or even the tasks that need to be done, and have some fun completing them. Activating the happy hormones we have inside our bodies like dopamine, serotonin and endorphins is so good for us. And they all get activated when we show kindness and help others. How cool is that?

8. Let go of perfectionism – Probably the curse of Christmas for many is the pursuit of the perfect day with no hiccups, all presents being exactly what people want, no trouble with the turkey and even no arguments. But perfection is impossible and the pursuit of it only fills us with anxiety and can also make us grouchy when things aren't how we hoped. So let's free ourselves of that 'curse', and let's take a deep breath and another one and another one and as many as we need to relax and find our peace.

And may you all have a peace-filled and rest-full Christmas.