

# Looking after your mental health during the festive season



The festive period is a hard time of year for lots of people, for many different reasons. It can make existing problems worse, and add new ones. Here's some top tips for supporting others who might find this a challenging time.



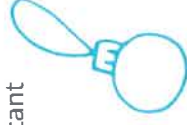
## Do

- Let them know that they're not alone, and that you're there to listen if they need you. Sometimes this might be all they need.
- Listen to what they say and accept their feelings, even if it's hard to.
- Ask them about what you can do to support them.
- Look after yourself. Supporting someone else can be difficult. For example, you might feel sad or conflicted. It's ok to confide in someone about how this is affecting you. Your wellbeing matters too.



## Don't:

- Don't make assumptions about why the festive period is difficult for others. None of us know how others are really feeling on the inside.
- Don't belittle or dismiss anyone's feelings around the festive period. Try to avoid saying things like "be happy", "everyone else is enjoying themselves" or "count yourself lucky, lots have it much worse". These statements may be well intended, but can invalidate the feelings of the other person and make them feel worse.
- Don't force people to take part in festive activities, and try not to take it personally if they don't join in. There are many different reasons, including cultural and religious ones, why people wouldn't take part. It's important to respect their decision.



## Get Support

The [Mental Health UK website](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk) has a wealth of information and resources you can use to manage your own mental health and support others with theirs.

Visit [Clic](https://www.clic.org.uk), our online community where you can speak safely and openly about how you're feeling and get mutual support from people who understand how it feels.

If you or someone you know is in urgent need of lifesaving help, please call 999 or go to your nearest Accident & Emergency (A&E) department.

