

Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing During the Holiday Season – College Counselling Blog #8



- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/christmas-and-mental-health/>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/ten-christmas-wellbeing-tips/>
- <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/christmas/blog/you-and-your-mental-health-still-matter-christmas>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/YfRzhXDKSZQxFVn30TIXBj/your-mental-health-toolkit>
- <https://student.kooth.com/>
- Mental Health at Christmas | Olivia's Mental Health Story | MIND

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJK9Vv9f9T4>

- Mindfulness Animated in 3 minutes – YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjtfyuTTQFY>

And remember the counselling service is here, just drop us an email at:

counsellorreferral@nptcgroup.ac.uk



10 WAYS TO DE-STRESS

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HOLIDAY SEASON

Discovering ways to unwind and find your calm during this busy time of year can be challenging. So, we've compiled a list of 10 ways to de-stress this holiday season. Try one or all of them!

Take a 15 minute nap

According to the National Sleep Foundation¹, short naps can help reduce tension. Shoot to get 10-15 minutes of shut-eye between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. when your body's blood sugar usually starts to dip.

Get Outside

Research indicates getting outside and connecting with nature may help decrease cortisol and heart rate levels.² If you're feeling overwhelmed, take a few minutes to step outside and take a breather, weather permitting.

Take a break from social media

Recent research found that active social media users who took a five-day break from Facebook had lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol in their body.³

Fit in some exercise

Getting your heart pumping can not only help you unwind, but it may also improve your mood.⁴ Lace up those sneakers and hit the trail for a quick 30-minute walk!

Start a new tradition

If you feel bound to a certain tradition (like making three dozen cookies) that no longer serves your health goals, switch it up! Try crafting or decorating the house as a family instead.

Savor a warm cup of tea

Different studies have shown that tea (specifically black and green) may reduce stress levels.^{5,6} Our holiday favorites include peppermint and chai.

Take something off your plate

While it can be easy to accept every invitation you receive to holiday parties and family get-togethers, remember, it's okay to say no! Take one thing off your plate this month by politely declining.

Do something for yourself

The holiday season is all about giving, but that doesn't mean you should neglect yourself! Take 10 minutes today to do something for you—whether that be reading a book, taking a bath or simply basking in some peace and quiet.

Have a good laugh

According to the Mayo Clinic, enjoying a hearty laugh could help you de-stress.⁷ So play a game with your kids or tell a silly joke to your friend!

Listen to some holiday tunes

Increasing evidence indicates listening to music is more than just an enjoyable past time, it may help reduce stress levels.⁸

1. <https://www.sleep.org/articles/napping-health-benefits/>
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5537891/>
3. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/medlib/library/tee>
4. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21996763>
5. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044456>
6. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00224545.2016.1453467?journalCode=vsoc20>
7. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2013/11/music.aspx>
8. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/exercise-and-stress/art-20044489>