



# How to Thrive at Christmas

Young people share their top tips for coping during the festive season

**Keep it in perspective** - Christmas can churn up all types of emotions. It can be a time of comfort and joy but also a time where we can feel left out, disappointed, jealous and sad. These emotions can feel overwhelming so it's good to remind yourself that others will be feeling the some of the same emotions. You are not alone!

**You've got this!** - Christmas can be as big or as little an event as you want it to be. Remember it is a normal day of the year, so you won't be the only one struggling. It's okay not to feel festive.

**What you eat can determine your mood** - We associate Christmas with having lots of treats and being full up with food. The term 'fed up' comes from the feeling of having eaten so much that you don't feel like doing anything. Sometimes less is more! Also, things like chocolate and sweets are great when you eat them but can make you feel a bit tired and down a few hours later.

**Don't bottle your feelings up** - One of the biggest mistakes people make is bottling up negative emotions. Don't bottle up your worries and feelings, talk to people you trust. Don't be afraid to pick up the phone, even if it is just a simple text message make contact with friends and family. Use your diary, write how you feel.

**Keep busy** - That doesn't mean pressuring yourself to be the life and soul of the party or becoming overwhelmed trying to please everyone. Use your free time to do things which make you happy and occupy your time. Those things are different for all of us but it could be as simple as reading a favourite book, watching some Christmas TV or catching up with family.

**Be social** - Social situations may seem overwhelming but even small interactions can help you feel more connected.

**Spend time in the natural world** - An old Zen proverb says: "You should sit in nature for 20 minutes a day. Unless you're busy, then you should sit for an hour."

**Take time for yourself** - It's great to spend time with family but remember to have some time for yourself. Take breaks from social situations if things get rough and don't be afraid to step out of a situation.