



Mental Health Tips for the Christmas Season

Making plans: preparation is half the battle

- Have a daily routine
- Contact social contacts early on for (digital) appointments
- Plan positive activities: cultivate (old) hobbies or try something new

Ideas for organising time alone

- Cook your favourite meal or try out a new recipe
- Do sports
- Listen to music, an audio book or a podcast
- Watch your (favourite) film or series
- Do a jigsaw puzzle, crossword or Sudoku puzzle
- Read a book
- Be creative by crafting/painting/knitting or creating a photo album
- Play a (video) game
- Go for a walk
- Visit a Christmas market
- Learn a foreign language
- Do a DIY project, repair something or redecorate your room
- Get involved in voluntary work
- Make a phone call, chat with someone online or write a letter

Take good care of yourself

- Eat and drink enough, healthy and tasty food
- Exercise (in the fresh air)
- Get enough (but not too much) sleep



Change your own perspective

- Re-evaluate your own expectations of the holiday season (and perhaps also those of relatives)
- If necessary, initiate changes (e. g. shorten or cancel a visit, seek support, celebrate with friends instead of family)
- Question negative thoughts: Does this view help me? Is that really the case?
- Example:

Negative thought	Question	Alternative thought
'I am alone. That's why Christmas will be terrible. I won't have any fun alone.'	Does this view help me? Is that really the case? → No!	'I may be alone today, but I'm still going to do something good for myself. Many people are alone today.'

- Develop and practise alternative thoughts: Write them down, hang them on the mirror, set them as your mobile phone background, read them before going to bed, ...
- Find an encouraging sentence, e.g. 'I am a good friend to myself and will take good care of myself.'

Consciously focus on the positive

- What am I grateful for? What is going well right now? What is doing me good right now? When did I feel (slightly) better today?
- Keep a gratitude journal

Offers of help (available over the holidays)

- Telephone counselling service (available around the clock, in German): 0800 1110111 or 0800 1110222, <https://www.telefonseelsorge.de/>
- International telephone counselling services: <https://www.telefonseelsorge.de/internationale-hilfe/#ihkontakt>
- Crisis chat (available around the clock, in German): <https://krisenchat.de/>

In emergencies

- Call 112 or consult your local psychiatric clinic:
e. g. for Mainz: Telephone: 06131 172920, Untere Zahlbacher Str. 8, 55131 Mainz