



# HOW TO MANAGE HOLIDAY STRESS

While the festive season is an exciting time for many, it can also be a great source of stress and anxiety. Whether it be the demands of large family gatherings and conflicting priorities, or amplified feelings of isolation and loneliness – the holiday season can bring up difficult emotions. With the religious holidays and Chinese New Year coming up, how can we take care of ourselves during this time?

## 1) THE POWER OF "NO"

It may be tempting to agree to every social engagement and family obligation over the festive period, but overstretching ourselves can leave us feeling frustrated, exhausted and emotionally drained. Understand that you have the power to set boundaries and decide how you spend your time, how long you stay at social events, who you see and who you invite to your own home.

## 2) KEEP UP HEALTHY HABITS

Although we all love to indulge in a good feast once in a while, remember to keep up your healthy habits. Be mindful of your food and alcohol intake and try to include some healthy, wholesome meals whenever possible during this period. Make time for an exercise routine and move your body daily. This will enable you to release stress hormones and calm your mind.

## 3) FOCUS ON WHAT IS WITHIN YOUR CONTROL

Uncertainty is the only constant in life. If you are feeling overwhelmed by your to-do list or anxious about upcoming social engagements, take note of what is causing you this stress, identify the things that you can control and take small steps towards addressing them. Set aside things that are out of your control, and accept that you have the power to guide your thoughts and reactions towards those things.

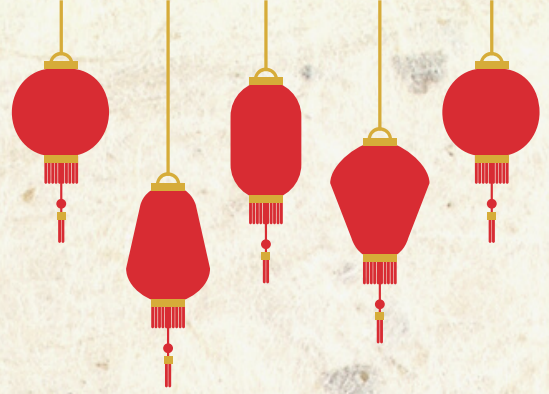
## 4) CHECK IN WITH HOW YOU FEEL

Just because it is the festive season does not mean that you should force yourself to be joyful and sociable. Remember, it is okay to **not** be okay. If you are going through a difficult time, whether it be processing grief or dealing with an illness, allow yourself to feel those challenging emotions and listen to your needs.

## 5) CARVE OUT DOWN TIME

Prioritise self-care activities and carve out down time for yourself – take a walk out in nature, create something from scratch with your hands, listen to music that you love or read a good book – whatever it is that helps you to feel rejuvenated and re-energised.





### 6) TAKE A SOCIAL MEDIA DETOX

With friends and contacts sharing snippets of their holidays abroad, elaborate parties and intimate gatherings, social media can become an even more crowded place during this time. Try to disconnect from your screen as much as possible to minimise unnecessary noise and distraction and focus on being in the present.

### 7) CONNECT WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

For many of us, the holiday season is a time of gathering and togetherness. While some dynamics within family and friendship circles may be challenging to deal with, remember that these occasions are rare and make the most of the opportunity to meaningfully connect with family and friends.

### 8) CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY

Many vulnerable communities in the city are exposed to increased feelings of isolation and loneliness during the festive season. Individuals experiencing homelessness and elderly people living alone are amongst those who need more connection and care during this time. Look out for any volunteer opportunities and organisations that resonate with you and get involved.



## SUPPORT RESOURCES



- [Mind HK Community Directory](#)
- [Tung Wah Hospitals free counselling support](#)
- [ReSource the Counselling Centre](#)

See also a list of useful hotlines providing 24-hour crisis help and mental health support in English, Cantonese and Mandarin [here](#).



The City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong (CMHA HK) is a not-for-profit membership organisation. We are an alliance of businesses, working together with mental health experts and partner organisations, to achieve our vision that every workplace will protect, support and create positive mental health for their people. We provide training, events, resources, research and practical support for companies wishing to create mentally healthy workplaces.



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