

# How to cut down on end-of-year stress



Come the end of year, stress levels can rise due to anticipation of the office closing, and also expenses you may incur over the festive season.

## Six tips for keeping your stress levels under control

- 1. Manage your expectations.** Not everything needs to be perfect. Don't try to force them to be – you'll just set yourself up for failure.
- 2. Try to set aside differences.** Difficult family members or colleagues won't change - acknowledge this but don't let it get to you. Go for a walk, or a drive if you need a time out, but try to set differences aside as much as possible to keep the peace in your home and work life.
- 3. Don't overspend.** If you need to spend money on festive season expenses, write up a budget and stick to it; remember that a holiday, gifts, or get-togethers don't need to break the bank.
- 4. Plan ahead.** Part of the stress is leaving things to the last minute. By managing your time properly, you can avoid the last-minute rush and added stress when it comes to meeting deadlines and planning festive season activities.
- 5. Keep yourself healthy.** Remember to keep fit and stick to a healthy diet during this last part of the year. Get enough sleep as this will give you more energy to get through; stress and depression can be aggravated by poor diet, lack of sleep, and little exercise.
- 6. Acknowledge how you feel.** If you've lost a loved one or are separated from them, it's normal to feel grief and to cry, particularly around this time of year and when stress levels are generally higher. Don't bottle it up, speak to your friends and family about how you feel.

Don't let the end of the year get the better of you.

There are ways to cope with stress and feelings of loneliness.

Remember, if you are struggling and finding it difficult to cope, speak to a counsellor or therapist. Contact your employee assistance programme to find out what's right for you.

You don't need to suffer alone.