

# Wellness Bulletin

DECEMBER 2020

Keeping Well During the Holiday Season



## KEEPING WELL AS THE YEAR WRAPS UP

As we begin the last month of 2020, we want to be mindful of how we navigate the holiday period so that we can enjoy ourselves after a challenging year, while also taking care of our health and wellbeing.

Here, we give you some helpful and practical tips to keeping well as we wrap up the year;

### 1. Practise the attitude of gratitude

While you may have faced many challenges throughout this year, finding opportunities for appreciation for both big and small parts of your life can provide a positive boost to your wellbeing. You may have to look a little harder but there is almost always something to feel grateful for, even in the really tough times.

### 2. Nurture your relationships

It was easy to lose the habit (or option!) of spending quality time with people this year with all of the social distancing we had to adapt to. Reflect on which of your relationships could benefit from some extra attention or quality time and make time in your schedule to nurture these in ways that are meaningful to you (and also possible within the context of ongoing restrictions in your area).

### 3. Stay connected with your physical and mental health goals and priorities

The end of year holiday period can provide a lot of challenges to our health – late nights, lots of party food and drinks, less time for physical activity, family stress, financial stress, and the list goes on. Spend some time thinking about what is most important to you this holiday period and identify any challenges that could get in the way of this. Then work out a plan to manage these challenges as best you can so that you can stay focused on your priorities. Aim for progress, not perfection.

### 4. Manage your own expectations

The “silly season” can lead to a lot of extra expectations and mental burden with organising family and social gatherings, gifts, decorations, baking and other aspects of the holiday season. If you feel exhausted by everything you ‘have to do’ try to review the expectations you place on yourself and try to prioritise tasks that are truly necessary or that create joy. It can be helpful to differentiate between the ‘very important’ tasks and the ‘it would be nice’ tasks. Try to see these things as a choice i.e. something you choose to do in order to create the holiday season you want for you and your loved ones. Some people also find it useful to have a holiday-themed personal mantra to remind yourself of the spirit of the season you want to create or embody.

### 5. Use social media mindfully

Be wary of how easily our minds compare ourselves to other people - unfortunately, our minds often tell us we aren't doing a good enough job, especially when these comparisons are through social media. If the holiday period is a difficult one for you, you may like to give yourself a break, perhaps deleting the apps off your phone for a while, or limiting the time you spend using them. Notice how you feel when you're using social media and if you are getting caught up in a negative spirals of comparison - put your phone down, remind yourself that no one's life is perfect (no matter how the posts look) and try to do something kind for yourself.

### 6. Seek help early

If you're not feeling like yourself, or are noticing signs that you're struggling, reach out for support sooner rather than later. You can contact us at SMG Health for free and confidential counselling and coaching on 1800 273 865 or make an appointment with your GP. If you are in crisis or worried about your safety, you can also call us at SMG Health (1800 273 865) or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

The team at SMG Health look forward to continuing to work with you through the festive season and into the new year and we hope you, and those around you, stay safe and well.