

Is the thought of Christmas getting you down?



For many Christmas is a happy time but that is not the case for everyone, for some it is a source of stress and anxiety which means this time of year is not enjoyable at all and can make their physical and mental health suffer. Many people find their feelings of grief are much harder to cope with too.



Tony McLaren, National Coordinator of Breathing Space, Scotland's mental health phone line, said: "Taking care of your own and your family's health is about emotional as well as physical wellbeing. Christmas can be stressful for people, and those who have experienced the loss of a close relative or friend can find it particularly difficult to manage".

"Everyone experiences grief differently but if you are struggling to cope, if it is affecting your eating or sleeping patterns or if you are getting feelings of guilt or anger then the NHS Inform Bereavement Zone may be able to help. It is online, has a number of resources and it is totally anonymous.

"Stress and grief can manifest themselves in many different ways including feelings of mental suffering and distress, sorrow and regret as well as physical symptoms like a feeling of weakness, exhaustion, decreased appetite and insomnia.

"What is important is making sure you stay occupied, making sure you get out into the fresh air if possible and most importantly, speaking to other people. If you can, talk to a friend or relative about how you are feeling. Alternatively, if your feelings persist or you would prefer to leave family members out of it, you can talk to a trained advisor by

calling Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87.”

www.nhsinform.co.uk/bereavement has lots of information and links to support services

www.breathingspace.scot is there for people to talk when they're feeling down