



## 8 CREATE ME-TIME

In the run-up to Christmas, carve time out for yourself – whether it's a massage, a candle-lit bubble bath (my own personal fix), a walk in the hills, meditating or being mindful and in the moment.

- \* Give yourself time to stop, breathe and appreciate this moment *now*.
- \* Don't record it on your phone, just step into the experience and live it fully. Be mindful of what you are doing and how you are feeling as many times as you can in your day.
- \* A mindful five minutes to still your thoughts and mind is a far better stressbuster than another glass of wine.
- \* Cherish each moment. Many people miss the joy of Christmas-time, not because they didn't experience it but because they didn't stop, reflect on it and appreciate it when they did.

## 9 SET BOUNDARIES

Christmas can often be a time to overindulge, both financially and emotionally. Set your boundaries before Christmas and decide what you want to do and how you want to do it. Make a plan and take control.

- \* Think first, act second. Say no when required and focus on you. We sometimes disappoint ourselves in order to please others. Stay in control and remember the controls are in your mind and thoughts.

## 10 BE A TEAM PLAYER

Don't be a martyr; share out your to-do list. A happy Christmas is a team sport with shared responsibility. Team Together achieves more. If necessary, bring in reinforcements. Make a sauce or buy a ready-made one? (Are you seriously asking me?!)

## 11 LAUGH

Laughter is the best response when something doesn't go to plan. So you forgot the cranberry sauce? Laugh about it.

- \* Your one annoying family member is coming for Christmas lunch but so are another six who don't annoy you. Approach Christmas



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with a smile and humour. It doesn't change the difficult relative but it does change how you feel about him or her. If you don't like something then change it, and if you can't change it then change how you feel about it – just laugh.

## 12 DO SOMETHING NEW

When was the last time you did something for the first time? Rituals and traditions change and diminish, so create your own style of doing Christmas.

- \* Most importantly, do something that has nothing to do with eating, drinking or presents.
- \* Move your body, go out for a brisk walk; it's a great stressbuster. Still your mind, meditate (even five minutes will help), unplug technology and talk. Jump on a rebounder trampoline for ten minutes (my favourite).
- \* Do something different. Last year as a family, instead of giving each other presents, we organised a Secret Santa. We were each nominated a family member and could spend up to £20 on a present for him or her, with the proviso that it had to be funny. We've never laughed so hard and for so long – or spent so little – as a family!

**The best way to ensure a fun, fabulous and memorable (for all the right reasons) Christmas is to use your magnificent mind**

to imagine it, plan it, create it and live it in the moment it is happening. Feeling happy, excited and joyful is an inside job so don't look to anyone else to give you a perfect Christmas; they won't. Instead, give yourself a Mind Makeover and have a wonderful Christmas filled with appreciation, joy and laughter. And where does all this magic begin? In *your* mind. Treasure it as it's your very best Christmas present. Happy holidays! 🎁

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