



Thrive through the winter

# **WINTER WELLNESS**

## 2021



## A message from us

The festive season may be a time of joy but it can also be a challenging and difficult time for some people. The ongoing pandemic has also affected our lives in many ways.

With this in mind, the three services Thrive@DM, IMP;ACT and Safe Space are working in partnership and have come together to develop this booklet to support you in the winter months. You will find information inside that may help you to cope with the festive season, overcome isolation and loneliness, and consider who to turn to for financial guidance and more.

## Who we are

**Thrive@DoncasterMind** - *working with you to unlock hope and strength to enable change*

This service is specifically for people who often seek support for emotional and mental wellbeing from their GP, A&E, 111, crisis and emergency or voluntary services.

Our service provides individuals with a shared framework in which autonomy, health, resilience and independence can thrive. Through a personalised approach to support, individuals can begin to identify patterns of behaviour that no longer serve as a healthy coping mechanism.

**IMP;ACT** are part of Open Minds in Doncaster, providing support to people who have attempted suicide in the last 12 months. The IMP;ACT team provide individuals with compassionate, tailored help to address the difficulties in their lives that contribute to increased negative thoughts, suicidal thinking and ideation.

The aim is to help prevent further suicide attempts by building each person's coping skills and emotional resilience, and to develop a social environment which meets their needs.

**Safe Space (PFG)** is a peer focused group that offers help and support to anyone in need or in times of crisis. They open 365 days a year with telephone and face-to-face access.

Safe Space have online socials via zoom on a Tuesday and a Friday. They also have the foodbank running and Winter Wardens (Intake only).

Thrive@DM  
01302 812190  
thrive@doncastermind.org.uk  
<https://www.doncastermind.org.uk/how-we-help/thrivedm/>

---

IMP;ACT  
07765 224564  
donccg.impact@nhs.net  
<https://www.making-an-impact.com>

---

Safe Space (PFG)  
01302 618507  
[safespacepfg@gmail.com](mailto:safespacepfg@gmail.com)  
<https://peoplefocused.org.uk>

## Loneliness and isolation over the winter period

---

It is easy to feel isolated and alone when life becomes challenging and you are struggling with difficult circumstances.

The festive period can make people feel more lonely than usual if they don't have that typical family structure around them, and the thought of facing Christmas alone can be a worry for many people.

Having a strong support system around you can help. It is important to stay connected to the people around you such as friends, family, neighbours and groups.

Having people to turn to can help you maintain a positive outlook and discourage feelings of depression, anxiety and anger.

Communicating with others can be helpful. Being able to talk about your feelings, concerns, hopes and challenges can enable you to stay connected and can help you maintain a healthy level of positive support. Having other people involved in your life when things are challenging, can also provide you with different points of view that can help in decision making when you may feel that making any decision is too difficult.

For many people even the idea of the looming festive season and feeling lonely at Christmas stirs feelings of anxiety and depression. These feelings, whatever their cause, can be made worse if you feel yourself struggling with negative thoughts or feelings over the winter period.

Loneliness refers to your own feelings, and social isolation means the level and how often you have any social interactions with people.

Whilst there is guidance in place to prevent the spread of the new variants, it is important to bear in mind that social distancing should not mean social disconnection.

When people feel alone or in need of emotional support they may turn to services such as A&E and the 111 service for help. These services play an important role in our community when needed but thankfully there are now other services we can turn to for emotional support. A list is included at the back of the booklet.

We would encourage people to access support for their wellbeing through our partnership.

### Keeping connections

Stay in touch by phoning, video chat or writing a letter. You can also try walking in public places or joining online groups.



Self-care is about taking time for yourself.

Creating time to nurture your mind,  
body and soul can have a positive effect  
on your overall wellbeing.



## Self-Care Ideas

We have put together some ideas for you to try. Give yourself time to explore them and figure out what works for you, one step at a time.



### Coming to your senses

Each of our senses offers a unique way of connecting to the world. The experience of seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling and smelling things around you not only helps you to centre your mind and bring you back in the present, but also helps ease the challenges that come with winter.

You can create opportunities to bring your senses to life - it will come in handy when you are feeling anxious or overwhelmed. Winter is a good time to look outside your window to see the sun, the stars and the formation of the clouds. Just gaze, and give yourself permission to relax and daydream. The smells of winter such as fresh cold air, pine needles, and gingerbread can lift your mood.

Music is another good example that can inspire you and invite you to move. Let your creativity flow by baking, cooking or painting. Or, simply slow down your meal, appreciate each bite and pay attention to taste and textures.

Focusing on your senses is one of the best ways to self-care, not only during the cold, dark winter months, but in every season.

## Make time for self-care

It's worth making time to look after ourselves. Start off by finding what nurtures you before creating your own self-care calendar filled with activities that you love to do.

Your self-care calendar might look like this:



### Winter Months Self-Care Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	Dance to music		Join an online community	Bake some treats		
Play with your pets		Go to bed earlier			Talk to your best friend	Read a book
Go for a walk			Play a game or do a quiz		Take a warm bath	
	Enjoy a nice cuppa	Draw or paint		Cook a healthy, filling meal		Light a candle



## Coping tips for the festive season

The period around Christmas and New Year can be a stressful and difficult time with all the extra pressure. Negative feelings can also be caused for many reasons such as: loneliness and isolation, past experiences, relationships, money worries and the ongoing pandemic.

It is important to remember that you are not alone.

We have put together some ideas that may help you prepare and get through it.



### Planning ahead

Think about what might be difficult for you over this period and how you can overcome it beforehand.

- Be mindful of how your routine is about to change
- Make a list of services that you might need and their Christmas opening times
- If you take prescribed medication ensure you have what you need for over the Christmas period, and ask someone to help you look after your medication if this triggers suicidal behaviours
- Create a self-care planner with things that you enjoy doing and make you feel good
- Keep plans flexible and allow yourself to change your mind
- Can someone 'check in' on how you're doing?

### Reframing – through the new lens

Adopting a different perspective upon how you think about Christmas and the winter holidays and what it means to you can be helpful. It may be a good place to start - try treating yourself as you would treat a good friend.

- Love and cherish yourself. You are worth it and you matter
- Give yourself permission to be you
- Remember it is okay to be not okay
- Think of this time as a period for rest
- Challenge the assumption that anything 'needs' to happen over Christmas and New Year

## Setting boundaries

When family dynamics and holiday stress get too much, it would be helpful to set boundaries around your time, space and energy.

- Give yourself permission to say no (in a kind way)
- Let family and friends know that you will need time out for quiet and calm
- Find a balance between your social obligations and your need for self-care
- It is okay to need a rest or a break
- It is okay to grieve if you can't see people in person this year. Try and make time online, such as watching the same movie while on FaceTime, or play a quiz together

## Taking Action

Keep up with your self-care routine over the period. These are some examples that you might find helpful:

- Find time for yourself
- Try to keep to regular patterns of sleeping, eating and exercising
- Keep in touch with your friends, family or neighbours
- Help out with a charity or good cause
- Be kind to yourself, and ask for help if you need it





## Services available over the winter in Doncaster

---

### Mental Health

---

- Doncaster Samaritans – Offer support for people struggling with their mental health. Call 116 123 (Free from any phone) or 0330 094 5717
- Single Point of Access (SPA) – Concerns regarding immediate mental health needs – 01302 566999
- Rethink – 24 hour helpline – 0808 801 0442

### Online support

- Doncaster Mind - <https://www.doncastermind.org.uk>
- Mood swings - <http://www.moodswings.org.uk/online-support/>
- SANE - [http://www.sane.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/support/textcare](http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/textcare)
- Campaign against men living miserably <https://www.thecalmzone.net/>

## Financial guidance

If you are facing financial hardship, you can call free on 0808 2082138 (Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm) to speak to a trained and independent Citizens Advice adviser.

Or contact the following services:

**Citizens Advice** – debt, employment and benefit entitlement

Now offers video debt advice appointments. This is a secure video call service that you can access online. To book an appointment call 01302-499330. Available Monday to Friday 10am to 1pm. [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

**Gingerbread** - helps single parents to support themselves and their family.

Helpline: 0808 802 0925. The call is free and confidential. Or visit [gingerbread.org.uk](http://gingerbread.org.uk) for more information.

**TURN2US** – provides information and financial support to help people back on track.

Visit their website <https://www.turn2us.org.uk> to find out more and access benefits calculator, which helps to outline what you are entitled to claim.

**Food banks**

If you need help from foodbanks, you can contact the following services.

**Doncaster Foodbanks**

To access the service call 07568 247 288 or email [infor@doncaster.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:infor@doncaster.foodbank.org.uk).

For more information, go to <https://doncaster.foodbank.org.uk/>

**St James' Church**

St Sepulchre Gate West, DN1 3AQ (Wed & Fri, 10am to 12 noon)

**Rossington**

Holmesarr Centre, Grange Lane, Rossington, DN11 0LP (Thur, 10am to 12 noon)

**Bentley Baptist Community Foodbank (BBC)**

Bentley Baptist Church, Askern Road, Bentley, DN5 0EQ (Mon, 1pm - 3pm)

**CRY - Askern**

St Peter's Church Community Hall, Sutton Road, Askern (Thur, 10am-1pm)

## Useful Contacts

---

### Alcohol support

If you are in need of alcohol support this winter, you might find the following information helpful.

Aspire - drug and alcohol support for people aged over 18.

Call 01302 730956 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, or visit their website <http://www.aspire.community>.

Doncaster Alcohol Services - online support service and group sessions; 1:1 phone/video calls; 1:1 support for people in crisis with signposting; free counselling with no waiting list. Call 01302 360090 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, or email them:

[info@doncasteralcohol.co.uk](mailto:info@doncasteralcohol.co.uk)

### Other Support

There is lots of support for mental health and well-being across Doncaster during this period.

Doncaster Council

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing/list-of-groups-offering-support-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

Open Minds - <https://www.openmindslibrary.com>

National Bereavement Partnership Helpline - for emotional support 0800 448 0800, 7am to 10pm

The Good Grief Trust - <https://www.thegoodgrieftrust.org>

The Silver Line - 24/7 support for older people. Call 0800 4 70 80 90 It is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

Age UK Doncaster - call 01302 812345 <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/doncaster/>

Same day health centre: book an appointment on 0300 123 3103 or ring NHS 111

Doncaster domestic abuse hub: 01302 737080 or email: [dahub@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:dahub@doncaster.gov.uk)