

BALANCE

The official newsletter of Integrative Clinical Psychology Pty Ltd



'Tis the season to...set boundaries

BY DINUSHA CRAGG, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Christmas lights, carols, mistletoe, tinsel and gingerbread houses... For many, the festive season is an exciting and joyous time of the year to connect with loved ones and celebrate the year that has almost passed. However, for others it can be stressful, overwhelming, lonely and tiring. Work commitments, financial hardship, burnout, loneliness, expectations, family conflict, social gatherings and thinking about that never ending to-do list are just some of the stressors people can face during this time of the year. With Christmas and the New Year around the corner, I thought it would be a good time to share with you some tips to help you get through what can be a very challenging time for many.

1. Prioritise your self-care. Christmas is often about giving. However, you simply cannot pour from an empty cup. Taking care of your mind and body throughout the year is essential for dealing with psychological stress. If you haven't prioritised your self-care over the course of the year, start now.

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Christmas Summer
Salad Recipe

Ensure you are getting adequate rest, nourish your body with good food, get outdoors, exercise and engage in daily relaxation. When we build a solid foundation around our self-care we are much better able to handle internal and external stressors.

2. Connect with your values. Spend some time thinking about the things that are most important to you and how you can ensure these are part of your day. Perhaps you value connection, humour, showing gratitude, nature and/or time with family and friends (including fur-friends). Once you've identified what is most important to you, think about what behaviours you can choose in line with these values. For example, if you value connection, what can you do to increase your connection with yourself, your pet, your family, or nature? What would this behaviour look like? Perhaps it would look like sitting with your dog on the sand watching the waves or playing tug or perhaps it would look like going for a stroll along the beach with yourself while taking in your surroundings or listening to your favourite piece of music. Whatever it is, pause and think about how you would like to spend this day and then have a plan for how you will do this.

3. Say no to overcommitting yourself. Christmas is a time we often overcommit ourselves to others. We say 'yes' to every social engagement (sometimes simply to please others) and we can end up spreading ourselves too thinly. This can leave us in a perpetual state of overwhelm, fatigue and resentment. To avoid this vicious cycle, practise a few ways to say 'no' respectfully (e.g., 'Thank you for asking. I'd love to but I don't have the time/capacity this week'). Also, before you say 'yes' take a few moments to bring light to what it is you would essentially be saying 'no' to. For example, if you say yes to attend that work party then perhaps you are saying 'no' to that extra hour of time with yourself or your partner. Whatever you are choosing to say 'yes' to just make sure it truly matters to you.

4. Be here. During the festive season, it's easy to get caught up in your to-do list and lose touch with the present moment. This in turn can increase feelings of stress and take us away from enjoying the present moment experience of connecting with friends. Try to notice when your mind is wandering or getting hooked by distracting thoughts, let those thoughts pass, take a few deep breaths and gently bring yourself back to where you are and what you are doing.

Giveaway Time!

Go into the draw to win a self-care pack! For your chance to win you must:

1. Follow us on Facebook and/or Instagram @integrativeclinicalpsychology
2. Find the competition photo on our page, tag two friends AND share with us your best tip for looking after yourself over the Festive Season.

Terms and Conditions Apply. You must live in Australia to be eligible. The pack may be collected in person or sent via post in Australia. Entries close 5pm AEST on 31st December 2018.

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choosing to say
'yes' to just make
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5. Stay connected and get support. If this is a challenging time of the year for you then it is important you stay connected and reach out to others who can support you. You don't have to go through this alone. If you are in need of crisis support call *Lifeline* on **13 11 14** or *Beyond Blue* on **1300 22 4636**. If you or someone else is in danger dial **000** immediately.



Standard and Travel Size Wellness Soaks from Soak Society

Check them out on Instagram: @soaksociety
www.soaksociety.com

Book: *A Mind of Your Own*
by Dr Kelly Brogan, Holistic Psychiatrist

Tea: Super Berries Tea by the English Tea Shop

Founder of Soak Society on Self-Care

NATALIE THOROGOOD, FOUNDER OF SOAK SOCIETY

1. Why is self-care important to you and when did you first learn the importance of it?

I first started caring more about my mental health and self-care after I had already started my business. I was about 1.5 in, and I had taken on too much, believing that I had to do everything at 110%. I was working full time, studying at my final semester at uni full time, I had two freelance social media clients, as well as trying to build Soak Society. I wasn't taking care of myself, and my body told me in quite an aggressive way. Severe headaches that wouldn't disappear, not being able to sleep, and relentless anxiety. I saw a Chinese medicine doctor /acupuncturist who really helped, and from there began my journey of learning about and incorporating self-care practices into my everyday. Obviously for me, this has become a way of life, and I'm so attune to my stress and anxiety now. I'm in no way perfect at self-care, I have even recently had panic attacks, but being aware of it and constantly learning and getting better at it I think is the most important factor.

2. What is your favourite self-care ritual?

My absolute favourite ritual is a bubble bath while watching a trashy TV show and putting on a face mask - bliss! Some of my other self-care toolkit practices include; deep breaths throughout the day, drinking lots of water, taking the time to walk on the beach when I need a break from work, positive self-love affirmations (either written down or thought), dancing, reading my angel cards and putting some essential oils in my diffuser or on my wrists, shopping for and cooking fresh organic veggies!

3. What would you suggest to someone who is struggling to find time for self-care?

Self-care is not something that should have to be added to your to-do list and you have to find an extra half-hour in your day somewhere for! It simply means to love yourself enough to take better care of yourself, whether that means eating better food, drinking more water, knowing when you need alone time etc. If you are struggling to find the time for 'Me-Time' like a bath, long walk, reading a book, or taking yourself out for coffee, I would suggest just to make it a priority in your calendar - work can wait.



'It simply means to love yourself enough to take better care of yourself'

4. If you could go back and speak to your younger self, what would you say?

I'm a perfectionist, and as I've gotten older I've realised that 'done is better than perfect', so I would say to my younger self to just try to do one thing well, not everything! Look after your mental and physical health better - you should be your number 1 priority! I don't regret anything though, everything happens as it's meant to.

5. If you had to choose only one, which would be your favourite Soak Society product and why?

BathDew Flower Power! It took a year to create this amazing shimmery All Natural bubble bath using no nasty (and mostly certified organic) ingredients. The best part is you leave the bath with your skin feeling moisturised and not dried out, because we've added larch tree extract - a vegan source of collagen!

Soak Society, founded by Natalie Thorogood, is a company based on the Sunshine Coast that has created all natural wellness soaks and organic bubble bath.

Find them on Instagram @soaksociety or visit them online at www.soaksociety.com

Recipe Share

EDITH, INTERNATIONAL HEALTH COACH & NUTRITIONAL THERAPIST SHARES HER FAVOURITE SUMMER SALAD RECIPE

WWW.COOLWELLBEING.ORG



Gluten Free Summer Salad

Ingredients:

- 250g Quinoa rice spaghetti (or GF pasta or base of choice)
- 3 Oranges
- 60g Pitted Kalamata or Black Olives
- 1/2 Fresh Mint Leaves
- 40ml Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 20ml Rice Vinegar or Balsamic Vinegar
- Himalayan Salt & Cracked Black Pepper (Optional)

Instructions:

1. Boil the spaghetti in a saucepan until ready and rinse under cold filtered water to prevent it from sticking together. Set aside to cool.
2. Cut oranges into small cubes and some into thin slices.
3. Chop mint leaves and mix with oranges in a bowl.
4. Mix oil and vinegar together in small separate bowl.
5. Combine cooled spaghetti with oranges and mint and mix well.
6. Add the oil and vinegar dressing and salt and pepper to the spaghetti salad as needed.

If you wish to make this salad appeal to children and they do not like the olives, just leave them out- it is still a delicious combination.

Bon appetite!

Edith from CoolWellbeing Foundation

About Didi Cragg

Didi Cragg is a clinical psychologist, personal trainer and director of Integrative Clinical Psychology Pty Ltd. She has a passion for providing an integrative and holistic approach to psychological services focussing on clients' strengths, building resilience, fostering positive change, and assisting clients to achieve their personal wellness and health goals. She also has a personal interest in the field of psychoneuroimmunology.

Didi works within the private health sector on the Sunshine Coast and has previously worked at a university providing counselling services to university students.

She has delivered evidence-based psychological treatment to individuals across the lifespan and from varying cultural backgrounds. Didi has authored two research papers on the influence of the media on men and women's body image and she has also been a guest speaker on a body image expert panel.



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