



IT CAN BE HARD TO STAY FESTIVE OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD

[Coping at Christmas](#) by Nicola Morrow

Christmas for most people is a time of joy and celebration with friends and loved ones, but for people with addiction issues it can be a lonely and stressful occasion. The festive period is also a time when addicts are at a higher risk of relapse due to these factors, and although there are no magic solutions, there are ways of coping to minimise the risk of relapse and to get through this stressful time.

Distraction techniques can be a useful way to focus attention elsewhere when the temptation to use alcohol or drugs becomes particularly strong. Distraction techniques can be simple things such as taking a relaxing bath, smoking a cigarette or having a cup of tea or coffee. It can also be useful to do puzzles, arts and crafts or something that you particularly enjoy doing that keeps you occupied. If the craving is particularly strong it can help to do something more active to focus attention elsewhere, like going for a walk, doing some gardening or d.i.y, tidying the house or cooking, baking or even buying yourself a little treat.

Family can be a great source of support through difficult times, but not everyone is fortunate enough to have a supportive and understanding family to turn to. If anyone reading this feels that they have no one to turn to for help or even just to talk to, there are various organisations and charity's available which may be able to offer help and support. Some of the charities and organisations are running events over the festive period and both the Salvation Army and Glasgow City Mission are organising Christmas dinners. AA, NA,CA and GA are running meetings over the festive period, as they recognize the added pressures that this time of year can bring for people coping with addiction issues, so please call for details of meetings in your local area. (This information can also be found online)

The Samaritans and Breathing space are only a phone call away and are only too happy to chat, so please give them a call if you feel you need to.

Contact details of these organisations can be found below.

Useful Contacts:

NHS 24: 111

Phoenix: 0141 332 0121

Salvation Army: 0141 959 3039

Alcoholics Anonymous: 0141 226 2214

Cocaine Anonymous: 0141 959 6363

Narcotics Anonymous: 0300 999 1212

Gamblers Anonymous: 0370 050 8881

Glasgow City Mission: 0141 221 2630

AMIS: 0808 800 0024

Women's Aid: 0141 553 2022

The Samaritans: 0141 248 4488

Life Link: 0141 552 4434

Breathing Space: 0800 838 587