

# End of year burnout

## Tips and tricks

Feeling stressed as the holiday season draws near? Let's examine some strategies to help manage end of year fatigue.

While the end of year period can be something to look forward to, it's also been commonly associated with increased mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.<sup>1</sup> Work-related stress that has built up over the year, combined with more social obligations than normal, can often leave us feeling exhausted and irritable rather than festive.<sup>2</sup>

Luckily there are things you can do to help manage the impact of this time of the year on your mental health. Here are a few simple strategies you may want to consider.

### Take time off

You may be wary of taking a holiday at this time of year because of the added expense of travel costs, but it's still important to look after yourself. Try and take advantage of lower workloads over the holiday season and take a break from work, even if it's just a short one spent at home.

### Manage your expectations

The holiday season can often come with unrealistic expectations about creating 'perfect' memories.<sup>3</sup> Try to accept that time spent with loved ones may not be perfect, and that it is not your job to make it that way. For instance, you may not need to stretch yourself financially to buy that extra present, or accept another invitation to a get-together if you are feeling exhausted.

### Care for yourself

A busier calendar of social and family obligations can sometimes result in less time for the activities that make you feel good, such as exercise or meditation. Try to build in time for these activities, even if it's for a few minutes a day.

### Prioritise your workload

Many businesses in Australia impose some type of holiday shut down period<sup>4</sup>, which can create pressure for employees to get things done before this break. If you have a lot of work you believe you need to finish before the end of the year, you may want to sit down with your manager and prioritise what really needs to be done before this date, and what may be able to wait.

### Disconnect from technology

If you're taking time off at the end of the year, try to 'unplug' as much as possible - research has linked using your phone with an increase in anxiety and stress.<sup>5</sup> By taking the time to put down your phone and disconnect from work emails and social media, you may be more likely to have a relaxing break and be fully present with loved ones.

1 Christmas - tips to reduce the stress. Victorian Government Better Health Channel, 31 October 2022

2 How to cope with end of year burnout. Forbes.com, 16 December 2022

3 Christmas can be stressful. Victorian Government Better Health Channel, 2 November 2022

4 Rules and entitlements during the end of year holiday season. Fair Work Ombudsman, 13 October 2023

5 Problematic smartphone use and its relationship to anxiety and depression. Anxiety.org, 4 November 2023

