

Greetings all. Today's topic is about taking care of ourselves over the Christmas period.

While Christmas is a time of reflection, celebrating hope, love and togetherness, it can also be a very difficult time for a variety of reasons.

It is not unusual at Christmas, to feel tired, busy or stressed. There may also be pressure on finances. These stressors can be attributable to the season, so how do we take care of ourselves in the short term?

Short-term:

Be kind to yourself - It's OK to feel sad, angry or disappointed feelings about Christmas and what this time brings up for you. It's important to validate and acknowledge those feelings.

Don't succumb to catastrophic thinking: Just because it's like this now, it doesn't mean it always has to be like this.

Made popular by Stephen Covey, the Circle of Control looks at how we can choose where we focus our energy and attention. If we focus on concerns outside our influence, we risk increasing our stress and falling into the space of accusing, blaming, and victimisation.



What are you in control of? What could be different? What resources do you have?

Look after yourself: Increased alcohol consumption and unhealthy food can make us feel pretty ordinary.

Try and eat healthy food in between the celebrations. Also, think about how you can reduce your alcohol intake or intersperse an alcoholic drink with a water.

Go for an evening walk or bike ride.

Get enough sleep: [Studies show](#) that the quality of our sleep influences our ability to regulate our emotions and responses to stressors.

Reflect: Think about what may feel difficult for you from past experiences and devise ways to manage your response.

Remember you're not alone: It may look like others are having a great time, but many are coping with difficulties of their own; what you see is not always the whole story.

If you know of someone who will be spending Christmas alone, invite them over, or if you look like you may be spending Christmas alone – [consider volunteering](#). Serving others is a great way to look outside of ourselves and provides an opportunity to show some kindness, humanity and to meet people from all walks of life.

Longer term:

If your mood feels like it's more than a temporary thing, how do you know when and where to seek help.

When: [Blackdog Institute provides a useful resource](#) for when to seek help.

Where:

So where do you turn if you're feeling a bit low? Try talking to someone you trust, reach out to [Bluehats](#) or talk to an [anonymous helpline](#). In the construction sector we are really fortunate to have [Incolink's Bluehats Suicide Prevention Initiative](#) helping workers who are doing it tough by providing someone to talk to on site.

Construction work is unique and Bluehats can be the circuit breaker, by providing support if things feel like they are getting out of control.

Lifeworks EAP

[CICA now provide a free well-being platform as well as an Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) for its member companies and their staff.

The partnership with human resource firm *Lifeworks*, who support over 26 million people worldwide, was launched by CICA in 2021 to coincide with R U OK Day.



The graphic features the CICA logo at the top left. Below it, text reads 'CICA Members now have access to:'. To the right is a photo of two construction workers in safety gear. Below the text is the 'LifeWorks' logo. At the bottom are three circular icons: a wallet icon labeled 'Free for CICA Members', a padlock icon labeled 'Confidential', and a clock icon labeled 'Available 24/7'.

Employee Assistance Program

Feel supported and connected

For you and all of your employees

A helping hand

More information, visit :
www.cica.com.au/lifeworkseap



The platform is a combination of pro-active apps which have a variety of resources relating to five key areas:-

- Personal well-being and health
- Relationship issues
- Family Issues
- Substance abuse and addiction
- Workplace challenges.

These include articles, videos, podcasts as well as links to other resources, and this is backed up by a traditional Employee Assistance Program (EAP), as well as a manager's hotline.

EAP counselling services, are predominantly provided on a telehealth basis, are completely confidential with 24 / 7 availability. Calls are triaged and prioritized depending on immediacy of need.

A phone-based manager's hotline provides support to managers, who may lack the confidence or experience to deal with a particular situation, such as interpersonal conflict or other leadership issues. The hotline equips them with the necessary assistance and guidance to help them, developing skills to manage situations going forward.

This service is provided free of charge to all CICA members and their employees and is completely confidential.

You matter, so be sure to take care of yourself or to reach out when things become a bit overwhelming.

Everyone needs a helping hand some time.

CICA wants to take this opportunity to wish you a very Happy Christmas and a Safe and Blessed 2023.

Stay Safe - CICA