

# When good is enough

Christmas: the season of good will and peace on Earth. That's the hope of most of us, but unless you are lucky enough to live in a "perfect" family for whom life is continual sweetness and light, you might need to do a little planning to ensure a happy Christmas Day for everyone.

Our society is under a lot of pressure to connect with as many family members as possible in one day. Many of us live in separated or blended families, and unless the various family elements are prepared to use common sense, our children may spend half of their Christmas Day stuck in a car being ferried from one parent to another.

However, there are ways to ease the stress.

The trick is to regard Christmas as more than a one-day festival. Why shouldn't it start on Christmas Eve and continue through Boxing Day?

Spread the celebrations around. The children can be with one part of the family on Christmas Eve, another on Christmas day, and see even more people on Boxing Day.

If your family contains all political hues and views on life, you may need to exercise a little care to stop the conversation around the table straying into dangerous areas, especially if tongues are loosened by alcohol.

Alcohol consumption is another area of personal responsibility.

It's all too easy to over-imbibe if your Christmas celebration starts at noon and doesn't end till late at night. So monitor the amount of alcohol you drink. Space it out with a glass of water between each glass of alcohol, or give yourself an alcohol-free couple of hours.

It's too late in the sober light of morning to retract the awful things you said or did simply because you didn't curb your alcohol intake.

If you are in the sad position of having your first Christmas without a loved one, talk amongst yourselves about how you want to handle it. Do you want to acknowledge their memory in some way, or is it still too painful? Every family is different, so it should be talked about rather than ignored.

Our final tip is not to try for the perfect Christmas celebration. Just go for the "good enough" Christmas Day.

Happy Christmas to you all.

## Survival tips

- **Don't cram too much in on Christmas day. Spread celebrations from Christmas Eve through to Boxing Day**
- **Think about strategies to deflect conversations when they reach danger areas**
- **Watch how much you drink and slow it down with a good water intake.**