

Finding Calm in the Festive Chaos

A Support Pack for Hospitality Teams



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To our incredible comrades in hospitality, as we navigate the spirited chaos of this festive season, we want to take a moment to acknowledge the unwavering dedication each of you brings to the table.

In a world adorned with twinkling lights and family gatherings, you are the unsung heroes sacrificing precious moments with your loved ones to orchestrate joy for others. Your aprons aren't just garments; they are capes, worn with grace and resilience.

Amid the clinking glasses and the symphony of sizzling pans, we recognise the strain in your smiles, the fatigue in your steps, and the echo of missed celebrations.

So, to the champions of the holiday hospitality hustle, we raise a metaphorical toast to your selflessness, your endurance, and your ability to find magic amidst the mayhem.



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About This Pack

The festive season is one of hospitality's busiest times, filled with energy, pressure, and emotion.

It's one of the most rewarding and most demanding times in hospitality.

We can't fix the fact that it's going to be busy, that there'll be moments when guests are rude, or that at times it might feel overwhelming.

But we can help guide you through those moments, showing you how to support yourself and your team, and where to turn if it ever feels too much.

This pack is designed to help you find calm through the chaos. We've created a short Festive Support Pack with practical tips, shareable posters, and details of our free, confidential support services.

Inside you'll find:

- Printable posters for staff areas
- Quick wellbeing tips to share during the festive rush
- Social media graphics and captions for your channels
- How to spot a colleague who might be struggling
- How to lead a team in peak season
- Support links for anyone who might be struggling

All assets can be downloaded directly using the links throughout this PDF.

It's designed to make it easier for managers and teams to keep wellbeing front of mind, even when the pressure's on.

Because behind every great guest experience is a team that deserves to feel supported too.

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How to Lead Your Team in the Busy Season

The festive rush can bring out the best and worst in people — pressure builds, patience thins, and even the strongest teams can start to fray.

As a leader, your influence sets the tone. You can't control the chaos, but you can control the culture.

Here's how to lead with impact when things get intense:

Lead by example, not pressure.

Your team will mirror your energy. Stay calm, even when things go wrong. A steady tone of voice and visible composure create safety when service feels out of control.

Be human first, manager second.

Ask how your team is really doing. Show understanding when someone's struggling, rather than defaulting to frustration. People remember empathy more than orders.

Set realistic expectations.

Be clear on priorities and what "good" looks like for the shift. You can't do everything and neither can they. Give permission to focus on what truly matters.

Celebrate small wins.

Whether it's surviving a tough service or making a guest smile, recognition keeps morale alive. End shifts with quick "what went well" moments.

Encourage breaks and boundaries.

Even in the busiest periods, insist on short pauses. A quick drink of water and five minutes of fresh air can reset someone's mindset more than you think.

Remind your team: support is available.

Normalise talking about stress and mental health. Share our free, confidential support service details where everyone can see them.



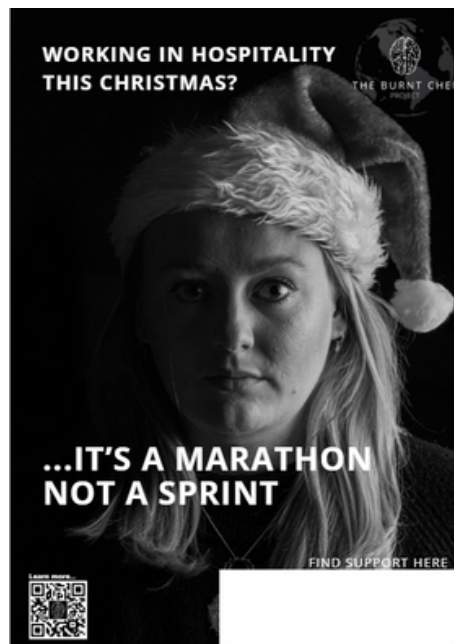
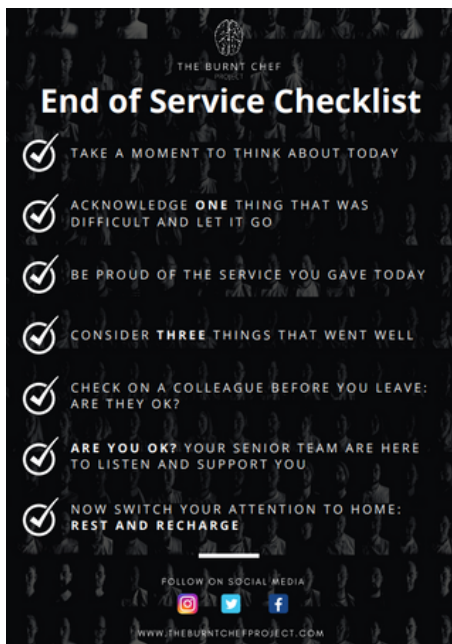
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Hospitality is built on people, and people need looking after.

Here are five small ways to look after yourself and your team this festive season:

1. Take five when you can – even two minutes to breathe or stretch can help.
2. Check in on each other – a quick “Are you okay?” can make a difference.
3. Fuel your body – eat properly, stay hydrated, rest when you can.
4. Set boundaries – protect your time outside work, even in busy weeks.
5. Remember, you’re not alone – support is here 24/7.



Click the image for your free poster download



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Small, daily habits make a big difference. These reminders can help you protect your wellbeing through the festive rush.

Prioritising mental, emotional, and physical health isn't a luxury, it's what keeps you thriving through the season.

HEALTHY HABITS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Self-reflection: understand personal goals and values.

Goal setting: define clear, achievable objectives.

Healthy habits: cultivate positive daily routines.

Continuous learning: embrace a growth mindset.

Resilience: face challenges with strength and adaptability.

Mindfulness: stay present and appreciate each moment.

Gratitude: Acknowledge and appreciate life's blessings.

Positive relationships: surround yourself with uplifting people.

Self-care: prioritise mental, emotional and physical well-being.

Progress, not perfection: celebrate small victories on your journey.

[Read our
blog
Navigating the
Peak Season:
A Survival
Guide for
Hospitality
Professionals](#)



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Festive Season Survival Tips for Hospitality Teams

Share these graphics across your channels, or staff messaging groups to remind your teams, customers, and community that wellbeing matters through the festive season.

Click the graphic to download!

HEALTHY HABITS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

CHECK IN ON EACH OTHER

Hospitality is a team effort.
Ask "How are you?" and really listen.



HEALTHY HABITS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

SET BOUNDARIES.

Protect your time outside work.
Rest isn't lazy, it's what keeps you going.



HEALTHY HABITS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

TAKE FIVE WHEN YOU CAN

Even a short pause helps you reset and refocus.

A two-minute break can change the shape of your shift.



HEALTHY HABITS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

FUEL YOUR BODY

Food and water aren't optional.
They're essential tools for a busy shift.



I don't feel right.

Let's talk!

Spark a conversation.

IF YOU'RE READY TO TALK, WE'RE HERE TO LISTEN.

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SUPPORT SERVICE

24/7 | FREE
CONFIDENTIAL

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HEALTHY HABITS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

- Self-reflection:** understand personal goals and values.
- Goal setting:** define clear, achievable objectives.
- Healthy habits:** cultivate positive daily routines.
- Continuous learning:** embrace a growth mindset.
- Resilience:** face challenges with strength and adaptability.
- Mindfulness:** stay present and appreciate each moment.
- Gratitude:** Acknowledge and appreciate life's blessings.
- Positive relationships:** surround yourself with uplifting people.
- Self-care:** prioritise mental, emotional and physical well-being.
- Progress, not perfection:** celebrate small victories on your journey.



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Spotting the Signs: When a Colleague Might Need Support

Everyone handles pressure differently. Some go quiet, others overcompensate with humour or long hours. What matters is noticing change, because change is often the first sign someone's not coping.

Here's what to look out for in colleagues (and yourself):

Behavioural changes

- Becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Snapping or showing irritability more often
- Struggling to concentrate or appearing distracted
- Loss of humour or detachment from the team

Physical signs

- Looking exhausted or run down
- Sudden weight change or loss of appetite
- Complaints of headaches, stomach issues, or poor sleep
- Over-reliance on caffeine, energy drinks, or alcohol

Work patterns

- Calling in sick more often, or conversely refusing to take breaks or days off
- Taking on too much work or avoiding responsibility altogether
- A drop in performance or pride in their work

Emotional cues

- Expressing hopelessness or guilt
- Saying things like "I can't do this anymore" or "What's the point?"
- Showing signs of anxiety, panic, or tearfulness

If you notice one or more of these signs, check in. A quiet "Hey, you seem a bit off lately, want to grab a coffee?" can make a huge difference.

You don't need to have all the answers. Listening without judgement is often the best support you can offer.

If someone needs more help, remind them that The Burnt Chef Project offers free, confidential support 24/7 for anyone in hospitality, no judgement, no stigma, just someone to talk to.

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Need to Talk?

You're Not Alone

Our free, confidential support service is here 24/7 for anyone working in hospitality and their families, anywhere in the world.

If you or someone you know needs to talk, please reach out.

You're not alone.



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Free Mental Health Support for Hospitality Professionals | The Burnt Chef Project

Access free, 24/7 mental health support for hospitality individuals worldwide through The Burnt Chef Project. We're here to help whenever you need it.

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Free Mental Health Resources for Hospitality Professionals |...

Access free mental health resources tailored for hospitality professionals at The Burnt Chef Project. Enhance your...

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Thank you for everything you do this festive season.

From the kitchen to the bar, the floor to the pass, your resilience,
skill, and care make the industry what it is.

Here's to a calmer, kinder, and more supported festive rush.

Cheers to you.

The Burnt Chef Project Team



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