



My name is Frayer, and as a mum with experience of child removal and kinship care, I know how hard Christmas and this time of the year can be for us. Whatever your situation this Christmas, I wanted to let you know that you're not alone. I wrote this with us in mind. Here's a few things that might make things a little easier. Check out my film and App recommendations too for some fun <3

1. Gift your self

We can't look after others if we don't look after ourselves. I know it can be hard at this time of the year to think about our own needs but having something nice for ourselves is just as important: Cosy Pjs, Hot Chocolate, Bubble Baths, New bedding. Maybe you could create a little box of things that feels special just for you.

2. Not all traditions are helpful

I'll admit, I don't like Christmas trees, they take up so much room and remind me of the past so I'm ditching it this year! Are there any traditions you feel like ditching this year? If you don't want to cook a huge dinner you don't have to! Give yourself permission to let go of traditions that cause stress.

3. How to manage if you feel lonely

Lots of us parents can feel isolated at Christmas. Watching TikTok can be a way to feel a sense of connection. I love hearing people talking in the background when I'm home alone from TikTok lives or just watching a funny YouTube video.

4. Not just December 25

This year I won't be celebrating on the 25th as that's not the day I'm with my children.  If this is the case for you, you can celebrate on a different day too. Our families are all different and our calendars can be different too; it all still counts and it's all still special, even if it's different.

5. Money saving ideas

Some supermarkets are cheaper than others, my favourite is Lidl and Aldi. Food banks often have more stock around this time of year too. Vinted is also great for saving a few pounds of fashion or gifts.

6. It's okay if it's simple

Playing a silly made up game, crafting, or watching a movie is special. Spending time when you can on a day that works for you is just as valuable as the money you spend.

7. A little reminder from me to you.

Sometimes the smells, bright lights, constant Christmas music in shops and the non-stop talk about Christmas might be challenging. I can feel really vulnerable at Christmas and it's not easy to talk about. It's okay to feel emotional, frustrated, lonely, happy and excited. Our feelings are part of caring for ourselves and healing. You aren't alone, you're part of a whole community of us parents trying to figure things out, doing our best and our best is good enough.

8. Reach out

Trust is important when it comes to sharing your feelings, letting someone who you trust know what you might need this Christmas can be so empowering, whether that's for a chat, a cry or a laugh.

9. Family time when we're not with our children

For some families like mine and others, it can feel difficult to make plans around Christmas for family time. It can be even more stressful having to get approval or permission. It can help to check in early with your social worker or family and ask about dates and times if needed. Knowing in advance might be helpful. I know, waiting for their reply can feel daunting so if you send a message, it might be helpful to do something kind for yourself so you can feel grounded. A nice coffee and a slice of cake?  

10. Getting through this together

Whatever this time of year brings for you, whether you celebrate on the 29th in a library or on a video call on the 21st, or have a quiet day at home, I hope you remember you're not alone. Parents just like us are doing the best we can with what we have. Whatever this year brings you, be kind to yourself.

Frayer 



I've thought of a few things that have brought me joy or been helpful practically. Here are some more recommendations that you might find useful or fun.

Here's my movie recommendations. *~~~~~*

Escape + Adventure

Jungle (2017): I love a survival movie that makes you forget the outside.
 Everest (2015): This one makes me feel glad to be tucked up in bed and warm.
 Gravity (2013): Out of this world, suspenseful action. I was a huge fan.
 The Descent (2005): Eeek! Horror and adventure combined.

Feel Good and magical

Big Fish (2003): This brings me so much magic, happiness, and nostalgia.
 Pan's Labyrinth (2006): A fairy tale for grown-ups and a nice easy watch.
 Bridget Jones The Edge of Reason (2004): I love this movie when I need a good long laugh.

Binge worthy series

The Girlfriend (2025): I was hooked from the start. I watched this all in one day.
 An Idiot Abroad Series : I know I'm guaranteed to laugh at this no matter how many times I've watched it.



Apps that have lifted my mood, and you might find similar ones you enjoy as well.



TikTok: For when my home feels too quiet.
 Vinted: For when I want to treat myself.
 Pinterest: For when I'm looking for a new DIY project, though I'm yet to finish many! Anyone relate?
 Headspace: I never got the hype around mindfulness, but I love the tiny sessions for walking, cleaning, or just chilling, didn't expect that variety.
 Among us: A game for when I'm in the mood for chaos

Numbers that I've actually used as a parent when I've needed support or help to lift my mood

Samaritans - 116 123 I've found them really helpful in the past especially when it feels hard to trust anyone with my feelings and experiences. You can share any emotions you are holding and it feels private and safe. They are 24/7 and it's nice to know no matter how difficult or stressful things get, there will always be someone to listen when things feel overwhelming.

Family rights group 0808 801 0366: They have been empowering for me in the past and have given me a better understanding of things. Their Free Advice Line is open Monday to Friday 9.30am to 3pm, excluding Bank Holidays.

*Take care,
 From Frayer*

Your ideas and doodles

