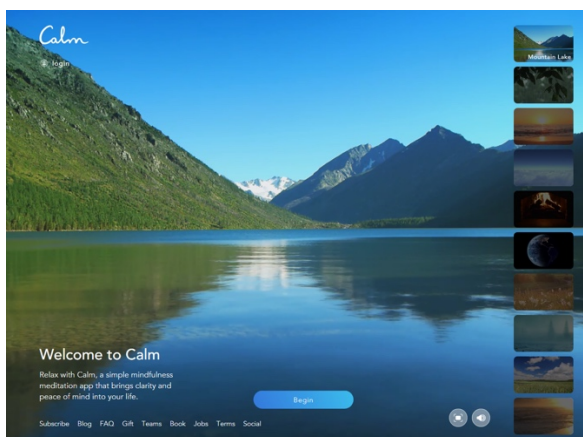




December Wellness & Recognition Newsletter

Need a Moment? Try the Calm App

If calm is what you're looking for – Calm's the app to download. Available for your phone or on your desktop, the program allows you to choose from a variety of beautiful scenes and sounds from nature to meditate or just take a moment to relax.



To start, this app puts you on a seven-day program

Staying Well at U of L

Lukas Neamtu Housing Services



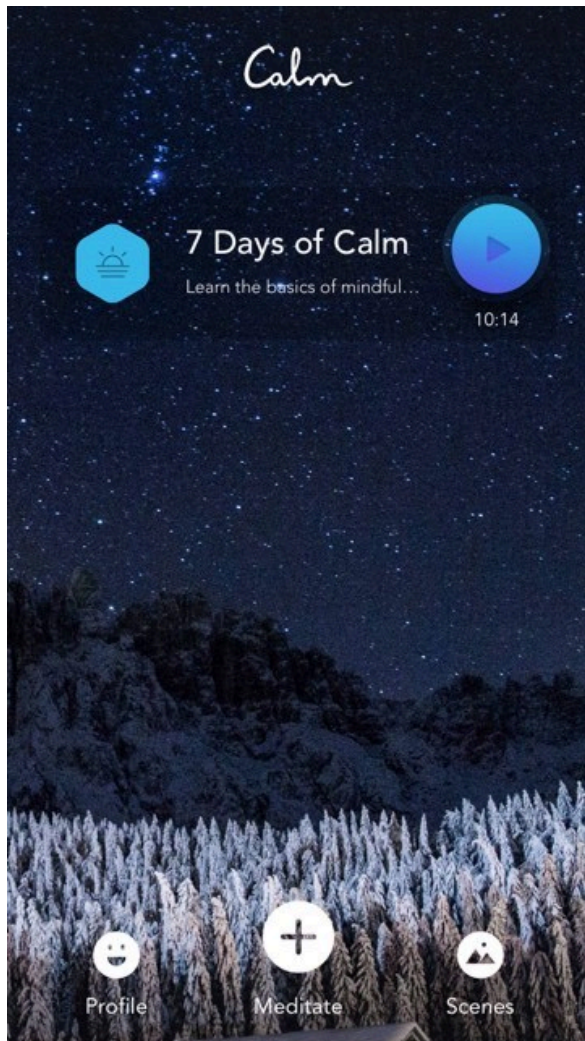
Upcoming Events

12/7 - tomorrow!
Lunch & Learn- Cal Toth's Journey to Wellness
12- 1pm
AH 100
[More info](#)

12/12
Knit n' Natter/Crochet n' Chatter
12- 1pm
U of L Main Gallery (W640)
[More info](#)

get to choose options for sound, length of time and help you focus visually while you meditate.

Multiple guided and unguided sessions are also available when you're ready to come off the seven-day "Basics of Mindfulness" and "Pulling out of Autopilot" series by the 21-day program on a subscription.



Subscriptions cost \$12.99/month or \$59.99/year or a lifetime. But that is for guided meditation. If you just want a relaxing scene to zone out on your own, you can use the app on desktop for free.

Lukas' dog for has helped him stay well by getting Lukas outside at least once a day to be active. Besides that, his pooch challenged Lukas' patience, communication skills, and mental capacities during training.

"Once you find success, it is all worth it. He's the best!"

Share how YOU stay well at U of L! Submit your activity [HERE](#).

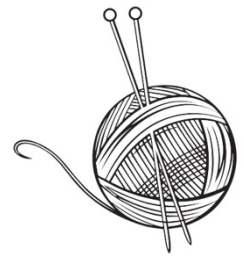


Calgary Corner by Karen Ogilvie

The holidays are wonderful—lots of parties, family, friends, delicious food, gifts, music and snow! Unlike many other holidays throughout the year, these festivities are not limited to one or 2 days, but last the whole month, and even leak into November and January.

We all know that feeling that the holidays can bring—when you see the first snow, hearing Christmas carols in the mall, and socializing with family and friends. It's warm, it's fuzzy, and it's wonderful!

But the holidays can bring up a lot of stress and emotion too. December tends to include a lot of extra expenses,



Knit & crochet- it's good for you!

In 2014 the Craft Yarn Council surveyed more than 3,100 crocheters and knitters and found that top benefits from the hobbies include:

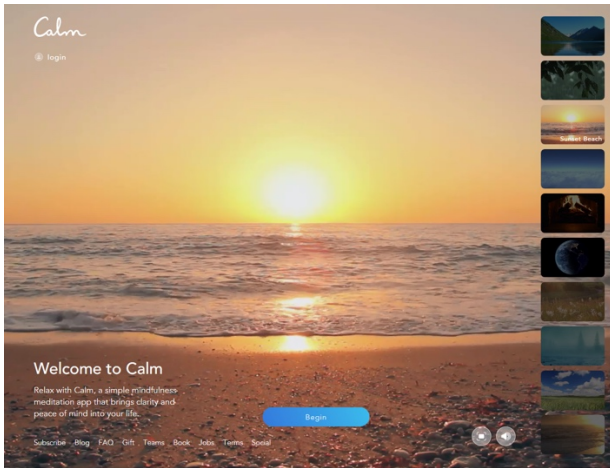
- Feeling of accomplishment (93%)
- Reduced Stress (85%)
- Improved Mood (68%)
- Sense of confidence (56%)

90% of knitters and crocheters responded that the craft improves their mood and helps them to relax. For 81% it decreases stress and for 57% it decreases anxiety.



Lunch & Learns

We are currently booking and planning



Fave Features: Great for people who have trouble sleeping, or need a dose of patience and inspiration to get through a hectic day.

Check out the [Calm website](https://www.calm.com) for a moment of relaxation.

rich foods, memories, and commitments that can really take a toll on you mentally and physically. As much as it evokes those feelings of joy and contentment, it can easily wear you down just as fast. There are so many other people around you this time of year that it can be easy to forget to focus on you.

Over the holidays, it is so important to be mindful and to check in with yourself. Take a step back from the parties, the people, and excitement and focus on how you are doing. If something's not feeling right, take some steps to figure out what that is, and what you can do to take care of yourself. The festivities are a lot more fun when you feel good enough to enjoy them.

Here's a few things to be mindful of:

monthly Lunch & Learns for 2017. Have an idea or want to present? Contact wellness@uleth.ca.

A light lunch is provided.

Upcoming Lunch & Learns

**12/7
Lunch & Learn- Cal
Toth's Journey to
Wellness**
12- 1pm
AH 100
[More info](#)



The Managed Care Program Helps Employees Healthy & Be Productive at Work

The University of Lethbridge has a progressive return-to-work program in place for its employees who are recovering from illness, injuries or surgery. The same principles can be used to assist employees who may be coping and living with chronic illnesses or injuries and need workplace modifications to be productive and at work. The premise of the program is that our employees are the U of L's greatest asset and that employee wellness is critical to overall University success.

The goal of the Managed Care Program is to help our employees who are ill and/or injured to maintain their health and be valued members of the University community.

- How's your stomach feeling? I'm not suggesting you shouldn't indulge over the holidays, but if you realize that you haven't had anything other than egg nog and cookies in the last three days, you might be feeling a little off. When there's a back to back holiday parties, try to load half your plate of food with salad and veggies, and then split the rest of the goodies between the other half. You'll still get to try everything, but it won't take such a toll on your digestive track. (And you can always go back for seconds if there's something that was particularly delicious you're still hungry for).
- The holidays throw routine out the window. Be conscious of the important parts of your routine. Build time in to go to



**December
Mental Wellness
Tip**

*Reflect on
the Year*

As the year comes to a close, many of us reflect on what has changed, or stayed the same.

Take stock of things that are going well, or that you have done well. When we always look at what



Wishing you and yours Peace and Joy this holiday season, and a New Year of Health, Happiness and Prosperity!

from the Wellness team:

Suzanne

Susan

Rachel

12 Gifts of Workplace Support and Affirm

1. The gift of helping out - Be observant and ask your n work if he or she could use some help.
2. The gift of sharing success - Share the work and sha
3. The gift of awareness - Reach out to your fellow emp are raising children on their own, could they use some bit of help, some transportation support, anything at all
4. The gift of empathy - Be extra patient, clear and plain legalistic, bureaucratic or rigid in your dealings with pe time of year. Christmas is not joyful for the isolated anc

the gym, try and get to bed at your regular time, and don't forgo your weekly commitments just to get that Christmas shopping in. Keep some elements of routine going.

- Stay active. Even if you can't maintain your regular routine, get out for a walk, head out to the mountains, try a hot yoga class. Physical activity is the best way to clear your head.
- If you're feeling down, be aware of that. The holidays bring up emotion and memories. If you are going through something that is pulling you down, take time to reflect on it and ways work through it. Take the opportunity to talk with those you are comfortable with, or reach out to other resources. Ignoring it by distracting yourself with a stream of holiday parties won't help you in the long run. Don't think about it as bringing down the holidays— think about it as taking care of yourself.
- Know when you need to disengage and where your limits are. Don't feel obligated to say yes to every social gathering that comes your way if that's not your nature. If you thrive in that setting, take it all in! And if you know you need your personal time, ensure your budgeting that in between your commitments too. You'll enjoy those social moments better if you feel refreshed and not overwhelmed.

we don't have we forget to be grateful for what we do have.

Give yourself credit.

Look to the future with optimism.

Also, check out the Mindful Employer Workshops - contact Suzanne if you would like to schedule a 45 min - 1 hr workshop for your team - [More info](#)

5. The gift of clarity - When working with others make d people know what you expect.

6. The gift of job fulfillment - A paycheck buys bread fo fulfillment buys bread for the soul. Employers, give you the tools and time they need to do their job – well. They much as you do.

7. The gift of inclusion - More than ever, include your c employees in meetings, going to lunch, share informati isolation can actually increase at Christmas.

8. The gift of listening - The most precious gift of all in : uncertain times. Give it to someone who really needs it every day.

9. The gift of fairness - Fairness helps determine emplo difficult times. Employee morale is a strong predictor o performance.

10. The gift of explanation - Employees are worried abo things. Employers, hold holiday workshops to answer c about pensions or health benefits, stuff that’s really clo

11. The gift of time to spend - Time at home. Time to do properly. Time to say hello. Time to reach out to co-wo here and now. Be mindful of the value of this.

12. The gift of love - As always, the greatest gift of all is unto the other. But, especially now, give the gift of lovin loving differences among us, loving those who suffer, l who are vulnerable and afraid, loving the young and th loving the older and alone.

Reprinted with permisison from Mindful Employer Canada, Wilkerson 17 years ago.

Enjoy the holidays! Take in all the wonderful things that come this time of year. Just be mindful of yourself and take some moments to focus on you. Because if you’re feeling refreshed and energized, you’ll enjoy everything that little bit more.

Since this is the Calgary corner, here are a few suggestions of FREE activities happening around the city this month:

- **Skating at Olympic plaza.** The rink is in along with music, lights and decorations. And it’s conveniently free and located kiddy-corner to the Calgary campus!
- **Lion’s Festival of lights.** Walk or drive down 14th street NW to see the festival of lights! (<http://www.lionsfestivaloflights.ca/>)
- **The CP Holiday Train.** On Saturday, December 10th, from 7:00 - 7:45 PM, the holiday train will be at the Anderson C-Train Station (<http://www.cpr.ca/holiday-train/schedule-canada>)
- **Holiday lights on Stephen Ave.** Wander down Stephen ave. to see the lights and decorations!

Enjoy the rest of the semester, and happy holidays!



Got holiday stress? Tips to help you navigate 4 common scenarios

[\(SOURCE\)](#)

The most wonderful time of the year can also be the most stressful. Don't let the pressure get you unraveled.

Here are tips to help you navigate four common holiday scenarios.

1. The problem: You're overwhelmed by obligations

If buying and wrapping gifts, attending holiday parties and making meals for extended family leaves you stressed, join the club.

Money worries, work and family obligations already have most folks stressed. Throw in six jam-packed weeks of preparing for the holidays, and that stress level soars to frazzled.



The solution: Set goals and stick to them

“The goal isn't to have five-dozen cookies or to mail two-dozen cards. Those are methodologies,” says Linda D. Henman, Ph.D, president of the Henman Performance Group.

The goal is to enjoy the holidays. Do that by defining clear goals, and then prioritize them in order of the three most important to you, says Henman.

Number one may be devoting more time to buying and wrapping presents, or baking your kids' favourite cookies. The idea is to focus on what really matters to you, and stop spending energy in

other areas.

“Nothing will be perfect, but everyone can have a successful holiday season by deciding on the top three things that most of the stakeholders consider important.”

2. The problem: The holiday blues are setting in

You don't have to be a Grinch to experience a little sadness over the holidays. For some, a mailbox empty of party invites brings the blues.

The reason? "Many of us tend to place too much meaning on the holidays, which adds extra pressure and can set us up to feel disappointment, anxiety, or sadness," says Lisa Firestone, Ph.D., and Senior Editor of Psychalive.

The solution: Take a step back to care for yourself

"We often think the holidays are supposed to be all about family time, but spending time with family doesn't always make everyone happy," says Firestone. "In fact, time spent with our families can reactivate old dynamics and stir up old emotional reactions."

Holidays are especially rough on those who are missing loved ones.

"These feelings are often intensified by our critical inner voices, which may mock us for being alone at this time of year when it seems like everyone else is with their loved ones," says Firestone.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, take a step back and make yourself the priority. Tune into yourself, says Firestone.

"Pay attention to how you feel, as you make different choices and attend different holiday events. Don't succumb to too many obligations if they make you feel stressed. Throw out convention and find the holiday activities that work for you and make you happy."

3. The problem: The celebration isn't going perfectly

Chances are your holidays do not resemble those of a Hallmark television commercial or twelve-page spread in the December issue of *Real Simple*.

Guess what? That's normal.

"Most of us look forward to the holidays with anticipation, excitement and expectations for a happy family time," says Dr. Fran Walfish, a Beverly Hills-based psychotherapist and author of "The Self-Aware Parent."

"Often, fantasies, hopes and wishes for a magically perfect time are met with disappointment when the children misbehave, judgmental guests invade your home, adult siblings fight and you worry about whether the family and guests will like your cooking."

The solution: Be flexible — and realistic

“We’re deluged with images of ‘happy couples’ and ‘happy families,’ grinning widely as they pirouette while holding pans of heavy turkey, or dancing through holiday shopping,” says Julia B. Colwell, Ph.D., author of “The Relationship Skills Workbook.”

“While most of us have our moments of glee, thinking we should be able to kick up our heels in excitement sets us up for disappointment.”

You also need to be open to revising the plan, says Walfish. “Don’t sweat the small stuff. Ask yourself: What difference will this make one year from now?”

Focus less on rigid rituals like getting to the Lego store before nine to get your hands on the latest trendy toy, and instead, embrace family togetherness.

“Contrary to popular belief, what kids love most about Christmas and Hanukkah is not the gifts, it is the bonding and coming together of family,” says Walfish.

“The adults who come to my office do not remember what they ‘got’ as a child for the holidays. But they do remember family dinners, parties and unity.”

4. The problem: You and your partner are bickering

Whether you’re ticked at your in-laws for showering the kids with too many gifts, or you’re irritated that your spouse’s football game has trumped decorating the tree, the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas become a tidal wave of anger and resentment for many couples.

“Often the holidays mean we’re giving up what we really want in order to please someone else,” says Colwell.

We’re trying to be the perfect partner, the perfect parent and the perfect friend.

“While we can typically override what we want for a little while, eventually this leads to resentment, which leads to the blow-up. Or at least an emotional shut-down and distancing,” says Colwell.

The solution: Honour your feelings and practice good communication

“If you’re sad, let yourself feel sad. Allow anger and fear to be present in your body, and to move through naturally. With loving attention, most feelings move through our body in 2-5 minutes.”

Smart couples practice effective communication throughout the year, but too often those strategies fall by the wayside during periods of high stress, like the holidays. Yet, that’s when we need stellar communication the most.

“Make saying what you want, or don’t want, an ongoing part of your conversations with your partner,” says Colwell. “The gold standard: Getting creative and finding ways for you both to get everything you want.”

Of course, no one would suggest you put your head in the sand when things don’t go your way, but taking a step back to let tensions cool, and focusing on your equilibrium is a good way to both diffuse and ward off contentious situations.

Finally, “take care of your relationship by scheduling time to check in with each other,” says Colwell.
