

# The choice is yours

Make Christmas a time to reconnect with family, rethink your future and think about who you really want to be.

**IF YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE CELEBRATING THIS CHRISTMAS – DON'T WORRY, YOU'RE NOT ALONE. A LOT OF PEOPLE FEEL SAD, ANGRY OR UPSET DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON. WE CAUGHT UP WITH JULIE NAGLE FROM AUSCOACHING TO FIND OUT HOW TO DEAL WITH THOSE FEELINGS AND HAVE A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.**

Julie Nagle is a Bundjalung woman who is a trained Coach and Counsellor. She began her career in Indigenous education and employment before deciding to become a Coach. She is passionate about life coaching because she believes it is one of the best ways to get results, no matter what your circumstances.

"I became a Life Coach because I saw that I needed to make some changes in my life, so I put my money where my heart is," says Julie. "I'm very passionate about coaching because it helped me survive, and I really want others to have access to that because it changes people's lives. Coaching can help us to plan what we want our life to be, regardless of our circumstances.

"Our circumstances aren't who we are, but sometimes we let them bind us up instead of just

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acknowledging them and keeping moving forward."

Moving forward can be difficult, especially at a time like Christmas or New Year when we look back and reflect on our life.

"Many things give people a sense of dread about Christmas. For some it is the pain of having Christmas without a loved one due to death, illness, distance, pride, incarceration ... the list goes on," says Julie.

While the festive season can be a lonely time, Julie says it can also be a time where we reconnect with people. In fact, she says, if you plan ahead, you might just have a better Christmas than you expected.

"I would really encourage people to connect or reconnect to people. It's about getting over your pride and putting aside jealousy and making contact, whether that's in person, on the phone or email. It's important to plan for Christmas time – if you know you could be lonely, then think about what you can do to respond to that. Plan who you want to be, who you want

to be with and who you need to reconnect with and what these things mean to you. Then take action with the resources

you have. For example, if you don't have any money then make a list of free ways you can celebrate."

If you're planning on making New Year's resolutions this year, then Julie says some simple coaching techniques may help.

"Again, it goes back to who you think you are – most people don't realise that they smoke because on some level they don't like themselves. If I'm working with a smoker, for example, I will ask, 'Who do you want to be?' and 'What's the gap between where you are now and where you want to be?' and we work on that. To help them figure that out, I often ask clients to tell me the top three things that make their heart sing. That way they can be who/what they want to be, rather than who/what they think other people expect of them.

Julie says the key to being able to recover from bad situations is simple: you need to really want your life to change.

"You hear people say that someone's hit rock bottom like it's a bad thing, but sometimes people have to hit the bottom so they can spring back," says Julie. "Sometimes people let the circumstances around them reflect who they are. If you're in jail you might think that's who you are, but you don't have to accept those labels. Instead, ask yourself 'Who am I?' or 'Who do I want to be?' Think back to a time in your life when you had hope – remember what that felt like and go from there.

"There are many examples of people who've lived through horrific circumstances and gone on to make a difference in their own and others' lives. It's not your circumstances that make you who you are, it's the choices you make about those circumstances."

## Your Christmas Survival Guide

**Get a plan in place to enjoy Christmas by asking yourself these simple questions:**

With what I have and where I am, how can I give the gift of joy to those dear to me?

What joyful moments from this year will bring a smile to my face and warmth to my heart as I remember them on Christmas Day?

Which five things that are within my reach would I like this Christmas Day?

Who do I need to reconnect or connect with, in a positive way, to share the gift of connection this Christmas? Who can I make a call to or send an email to? Whose hand can I shake?

What steps do I need to take to achieve them?

With these things in place, who will I be?

What can I do that makes my heart sing?

Who is dear/important to me?

For more information about coaching, visit [www.auscoaching.com.au](http://www.auscoaching.com.au) or email [julie@auscoaching.com.au](mailto:julie@auscoaching.com.au)



LIFE COACH JULIE NAGLE