



What's the story?

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# Soilse News

## Happy Christmas, everyone!



**C**hristmas greetings to everyone in Soilse.

Christmas is supposedly a time for joy and celebration but, during the Celtic Tiger years, it became a symbol of consumerism with huge amounts of money being spent lavishly.

Christmas can also be a time of huge financial pressure on families to meet unrealistic expectations. These expectations are conditioned by society and reinforced by advertising in the media.

For those enduring addictions, the Christmas period is a major challenge, with lots of drink and drugs available. It is also a time

where reflection on family problems can leave people feeling raw.

Planning how to survive Christmas is very important so make sure you have a day-by-day routine organised.

Talk to your key worker and attend Soilse over the holiday period. Also, attend daily fellowship meetings and remember there is an **NA meeting in Soilse on Christmas Day at 11:15am in Henrietta Place.**

The Christmas Day NA meeting in Soilse is now in its eighth year. All are welcome to attend.

**Gerry McAleenan  
Head of Services**

### Soilse is moving

**S**oilse will be leaving North Frederick Street in December and transferring our programme to Green Street (just around the corner from Henrietta Place).

Group rooms and staff offices will be in Green Street but some sessions such as Art will take place in Henrietta Place.

We will need to be patient to get things up and running. However, we are committed to making Soilse the best service in Ireland and your input and ideas are central to making this happen.

Any thoughts on the move? Tell your key worker or any member of staff.

### Christmas opening hours

Soilse will be open on Christmas Eve. We are also open on 29, 30 and 31 December. In addition, there is an NA meeting at 11:15am on Christmas Day in Henrietta Place.



You are invited to the lighting of the Christmas Tree on **Buckingham Street on Thursday 9 December at 5:30pm** to commemorate all those who have died from drug-related causes. Tea and coffee will be served in the hall in Killarney Court after the event.

### Meet the Mayor

**T**he Lord Mayor of Dublin, Fine Gael Councillor Gerry Breen, will visit Soilse in on Tuesday, 16 December at 3:15pm.

Everyone in Soilse is invited to meet the Mayor who is on a fact-finding visit around drugs and addiction.

The Mayor has been critical of some aspects of drug responses and this is an opportunity to show him what can be done when proper programmes are put in place to meet the needs of recovering addicts.

Come along and share your views!

## FETAC Night—a resounding success

**M**any thanks to all of you who came to our FETAC night in the Sean O'Casey Community Centre, East Wall, on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

We had a full house and it was inspiring to see all our talented actors and musicians in performance.

The highlight was the awarding of 389 FETAC certs to participants. Congratulations to all of you.

Pat Carey, Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs, made an excellent speech commending Soilse for "being one of the best thought-out pro-

grammes anywhere". He also mentioned Soilse on Twitter.

The next issue of *Drugnet Ireland*, published by the Health Research Board, will feature a full report on the evening. There is also a report on the database of the National Documentation Centre on Drug Use.



# Christmas in early recovery

- by HP participants

## Staying safe

I'll start by saying if you're in your first two years of recovery, just keep yourself safe and try and be around positive people.

If you're like me, don't have kids and have a mental family, Christmas can get very lonely and boring when you're clean and sober.

I do know from experience that having great friends in recovery helps because they welcome you to join them in their celebrations. I also try and get as many meetings as I can because it's the one time of the year that no matter how long I'm clean, I can get ropey.

Some people in recovery call it the silly season. It can be quite enjoyable and you can get through it and have a laugh and still stay clean and sober.

Just try to be safe and stick with the winners.



Stay safe this Christmas.  
Keep around positive people.  
Go to meetings.  
Look after yourself.  
Enjoy the holiday.

## Moving on

Now that I'm ready to move on to the other Soilse, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Soilse and the staff for all their hard work and help in helping me to get clean and stay clean and overcoming the obstacles that came up for me while I was here. So, a big thank you to all.

Francesca



## Getting through

I am not looking forward to Christmas as this is the first Christmas in a while that I'm not using drugs.

Also, it's the first Christmas that I will be alone and without my father who passed away in September from complications due to cancer.

My older brother and mother are the only ones left in Ireland and my brother has his own family. Also, my family is re-married so they will be doing their own thing for Christmas. I will be welcome to spend Christmas with them but I'm still not looking forward to it.

I'm living in a B&B at the moment so will find it hard to get into the Christmas spirit as I was very close to my Dad and spent all the holidays with him. I also have court cases coming up so I don't know if I will be out for Christmas. So, I am finding it hard to plan for it but, who knows, I could have a great Christmas. I hope to be drug-free so that will be a bonus and a new experience.

Colin

## Christmas gift suggestions

- To your enemy, forgiveness
- To an opponent, tolerance
- To a friend, your heart
- To a customer, service
- To all, charity
- To every child, a good example
- To yourself, respect.

## Enjoying the moment

I'm clean 95 days today. I was on 80 mls of methadone five months ago and I decided to go to NA. From then, it took me eight weeks to come off the 80 mls.

I think it is great to be clean. This is my first Christmas to be clean in 15 years and I'm really excited about that.

I will go to my sister's on Christmas Eve and join in the family for Christmas Day. We all have dinner in my other sister's and there is a family gathering in the evening but I'll go home to my Mam's house because they will all be drinking, Stephens's Day, I'll go home to my house and be with my friends.

This is my ideal Christmas and I love it.



## Acceptance

I have everything here. The staff are lovely people. I love Christmas and have two children. The key worker is a lovely woman. I'm a completely different woman since starting. I thank God for being here and I wish everyone a very safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

CH

