



LifeResolutions®

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### AVOID THE BLUES THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON

**Life Resolutions®** – a leading network of professional psychology centres across Melbourne - is anticipating an increase in calls this Christmas season from people seeking assistance from psychologists.

Director and principal psychologist of **Life Resolutions®**, Mary Magalotti, said they had received a marked increase in calls both before and after the Christmas period for the past few years.

“While the Christmas holiday season for many people is filled with celebrations and social gatherings, it can be the most stressful, lonely and depressing time of year for many others,” Ms Magalotti said.

“Depression around the holidays can affect many who have no history of depression or mental illness.

“Common reasons given for feeling stressed, anxious and depressed include dreading upcoming dysfunctional family gatherings, financial strain, feeling “overstretched” on the social front, experiencing loneliness or loved ones being absent, and expectations of the Christmas period not being met.

“During the holidays, behaviours can become more intense with increased proximity to loved ones, generational connections and differences may be magnified, old unresolved issues can often surface and there may be pressure to celebrate certain rituals,” she said.

However with a bit of pre-planning and sticking to a few simple tips, Ms Magalotti believes people can successfully stave off the holiday blues:

- reduce expectations of having to have the “perfect” Christmas and don’t try and do it all yourself
- cut back on commitments - don’t feel the need to attend every celebration to which you’re invited
- take care of yourself and don’t overindulge - keep alcohol and “party” food intake to a minimum and continue to follow your regular exercise regime
- set and stay within a budget for gifts, entertainment and food - be realistic about what you can afford - and avoid contributing to the nation’s enormous \$41 billion credit card debt\*
- acknowledge any feelings of grief or loss – seek assistance, talk about it with a trusted friend and ensure you express your grief
- if you’re lonely, try to be around people, and if necessary volunteer your time to a charity or good cause – even if it’s just helping a friend
- remember that Christmas is about peace, love and tolerance, so try to embrace this spirit during the holidays
- use any “down-time” you have to set realistic goals for what you want in the future instead of stressing about uncertainty in the future

**AVOID THE BLUES THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON cont.**

Ms Magalotti said that if people are unable to get rid of the holiday blues, or simply want to work through some ideas to become emotionally healthier and happier, they should seek professional and effective counselling from a psychologist.

“Depression is a common illness with one in four women and one in six men in Australia tipped to experience clinical depression at some time in their lives\*\*. Therefore, it’s vital to get the right support to fight the illness,” she said.

**Life Resolutions**<sup>®</sup> is a leading network of professional and caring psychology centres, serving local communities. All **Life Resolutions**<sup>®</sup> psychologists are highly experienced and fully registered. They are members of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) and abide by its ethical code and professional standards.

For day, evening and Saturday appointments call **Life Resolutions**<sup>®</sup> on **(03) 9380 4444**.

\* **Source: Reserve Bank of Australia statistics**

\*\* **Source: Mental Health Foundation of Australia (Victoria)**

**Ends –**

**For media interviews contact Mary Magalotti, *Life Resolutions*<sup>®</sup> on 0402 905 041**