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Beating Depression & Anxiety

Holiday Blues, Post-Holiday Blues, and New Year Resolutions

While the holidays and new year can be a joyous time, it can sometimes be very difficult to feel the beginning of the year cheer. The season can also bring depression in some people who may experience loneliness or remind them of losing someone special to them. This edition of our Mental Health Matters newsletter will deal with the stress and depression that can sometimes come with the holiday season and the new year obligations.

What Are Post-Holiday Blues?

If you find yourself feeling a little down after the holidays, you may be experiencing the post-holiday blues. The post-holiday blues are a short-term, low mood that happens after festivities and holidays. It makes sense with how exciting the holidays are compared to your everyday life and routines. Many people get the blues and if you are feeling down after the holidays, you are not alone.

The post-holiday blues are different from diagnostic mood disorders. Post-holiday depression typically doesn't last long and is not as severe as conditions like clinical depression and seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

Signs of Post-Holiday Blues

- Feeling unmotivated
- Having increased anxiety
- Experiencing concerns about money
- Having trouble sleeping
- Not wanting to do normal activities with family or friends
- Engaging less enthusiastically in your job or hobbies
- Feeling overwhelmed or underwhelmed
- Having more trouble concentrating than before the holidays
- Emotional outbursts like crying or yelling more often
- Finding it harder to get back into the swing of everyday life
- Dwelling on missing holiday experiences and family

Symptoms of Post-Holiday Blues

- Sadness
- Worry
- Emptiness
- Loneliness
- Stress
- Irritability

How to Cope With the Post-Holiday Blues

- Exercise
- Meditation
- Sleep
- Mental Health apps
- Social connection
- Journaling
- Limit social media
- Light or color therapy
- Setting new goals
- Professional help

The holiday blues can be quite common, but if you are feeling especially down—for example, your sleep or your appetite is affected—contact your health care provider or visit the National Mental Health Association online at <http://www.nmha.org> for help and guidance. If you are thinking about suicide, call 988 or your health care provider immediately.

Helping your child through Post-Holiday Blues: New Year, New Goals

Fall is a season busy with the return to school, holidays, and the new year. The numerous celebrations and time off from the regular routine can lead to a 'let down' effect when January comes around. This feeling can be intensified by gray weather, limited daylight, and even dietary changes due to colder weather.

10 New Year's Resolutions for Stress Relief



Perfect your sleep hygiene



Find a hobby



Focus on your relationships



Listen to music more



Declutter your home



Learn breathing techniques



Schedule daily meditation time



Replace negative self-talk



Take up yoga



Create a five-year plan

Here are a few suggestions for parents to help your child thrive until spring:

Get active! Exercise, best method for balancing our body's energy levels and improving our mood. The more active you and your child are the better you both will feel.

Eat well. Enjoy fresh vegetables and fruits and help children learn how to eat healthy all year round. Limit sugary snacks and drinks by leaving them off the grocery list – you'll feel better.

Create new post-holiday traditions. When the holidays are over, children may feel disappointed that they have "nothing to look forward to." Create new traditions that are fun and inexpensive like board game or movie nights.

Surround yourself with positive, fun-loving people! Laughing naturally leads to better emotional regulation, and creates better bonds between family and friends. Who we surround ourselves with influences how we feel.

Increase sleep and stick to a routine. Create a sleep schedule and stick to it to ensure you and your child have what you need to fight off illness and negative emotions.



JANUARY SELF-CARE CHALLENGE				
LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE OR SKILL	 TAKE A BREAK FROM TECHNOLOGY	BUY YOURSELF FLOWERS 	HAVE A MEAL WITH A FRIEND	READ A BOOK 
DECLUTTER A ROOM 	SLEEP AT LEAST 8 HOURS A NIGHT TWO TIMES A WEEK	FORGIVE SOMEONE AND FORGIVE YOURSELF	 BUY YOURSELF A CUP OF COFFEE OR TEA	WRITE DOWN THREE NEW GOALS THIS YEAR
TAKE A 20 MIN WALK AT LEAST TWICE A WEEK 	REACH OUT TO SOMEONE YOU HAVE NOT TALKED TO IN A LONG TIME	TAKE A NEW PHOTO OF SOMEONE YOU LOVE AT LEAST 5 TIMES THIS MONTH	IF YOU GET ANGRY, TAKE A BREATH AND THINK LOVING THOUGHTS	DO SOMETHING CREATIVE, CROCHET, PAINT, ETC. 
 HAVE A HYGGE DAY	TELL SOMEONE YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR THEM	DRINK AT 64 OUNCES OF WATER AT LEAST TWICE A WEEK	HUG 5 PEOPLE YOU SEE TODAY 	PLAY CARDS OR A GAME WITH AT LEAST TWO OTHER PEOPLE
DO AN ACT OF KINDNESS WITHOUT EXPECTING A THANK YOU	 WATCH A SUNRISE OR SUNSET & QUIETLY MEDITATE	COOK A DISH YOU WOULD NOT NORMALLY MAKE 	ASK SOMEONE TO HELP YOU	BE AROUND SOMEONE WHO MAKES YOU LAUGH 

Happy New Year!

The holidays can be a wonderful time to celebrate and be together with friends and family, but it can also be stressful and difficult for some. If you find yourself needing more support while starting the new year please refer to the below mental health resources.

- Spring Branch Community Health Center (SBCHC) <https://sbchc.net/> 713-462-6565 Outpatient and school-based child and family therapy services
- Council on Recovery <https://www.councilonrecovery.org/> (713) 942-4100
Therapeutic counseling and alcohol and drug intervention
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7 hotline) - call (800) 273-8255 or 988.
- 24/7 Crisis Text Line - Text HOME to 741741.

Sources:

American Psychiatric Association <https://www.psychiatry.org>
National Mental Health Association <http://www.nmha.org/>