

MAINTAINING MENTAL WELLNESS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Dr. Lia A. Knox

Mental Wellness Expert

Licensed Professional Counselor

Knox Behavioral Health Solutions

Dr.liaknox@gmail.com

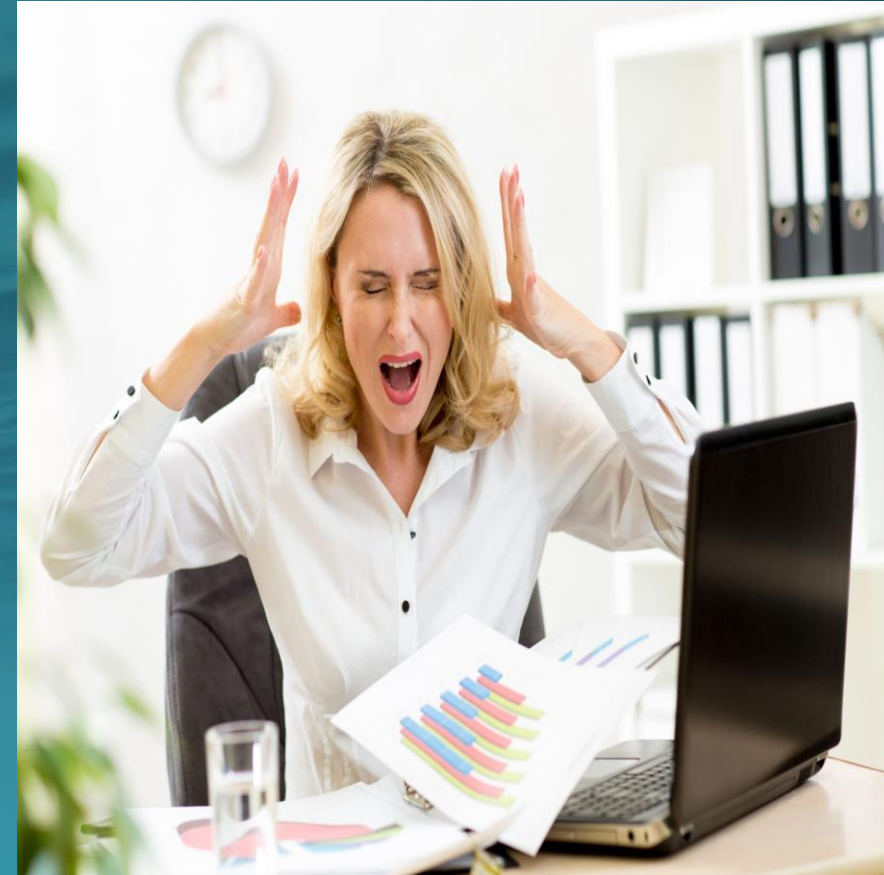


Holiday Blues: You Are Not Alone!

- 3 in 5 people feel their mental health is negatively impacted by the holidays
- 56% wish the holidays were canceled due to the stress of the season
- 64% feel an increase in mental health stressors during the holiday season
- 60% report an increase in anxiety
- 52% feel an increase in depression
- 70% feel more financial stress
- 66% reported feeling lonely

“End-of Year Stress”What’s That?

- 84% of workplaces report this period is the most stressful time of year
- Time to complete annual goals, budgets and plan for the next year
- Days become shorter, darker and colder
- Several major holidays (2-3 weeks off from school)



Five Tips to Manage End-of-Year Stress

1. Manage Your Mindset
2. Ease Expectations of Yourself and Others
3. Pump Up the Fun!
4. Enjoy the Wait
5. Make Time for Self-Care



Sources of Holiday Stress

- Shopping for gifts
- Managing children's excitement
- Navigating difficult family dynamics
- Managing mental health and/or addiction issues
- Family conflict and holiday expectations
- Managing “end of year” work expectations



Holiday Self-Care Tips



Make space for messy feelings like grief.



Learn to say no without feeling guilty.

Create your own holiday traditions.



Keep your stress levels in check. It's okay to step back or delegate.

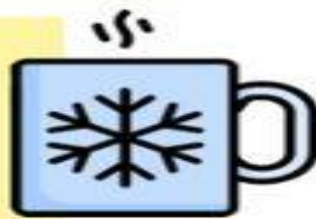


Set realistic expectations for yourself and the holiday.

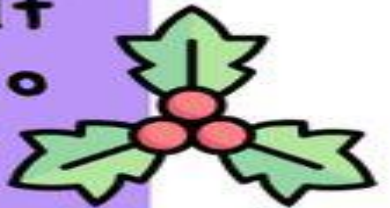


Make a plan and try to stick to it. Organization is key

Keep your self-care routine or begin a new one.

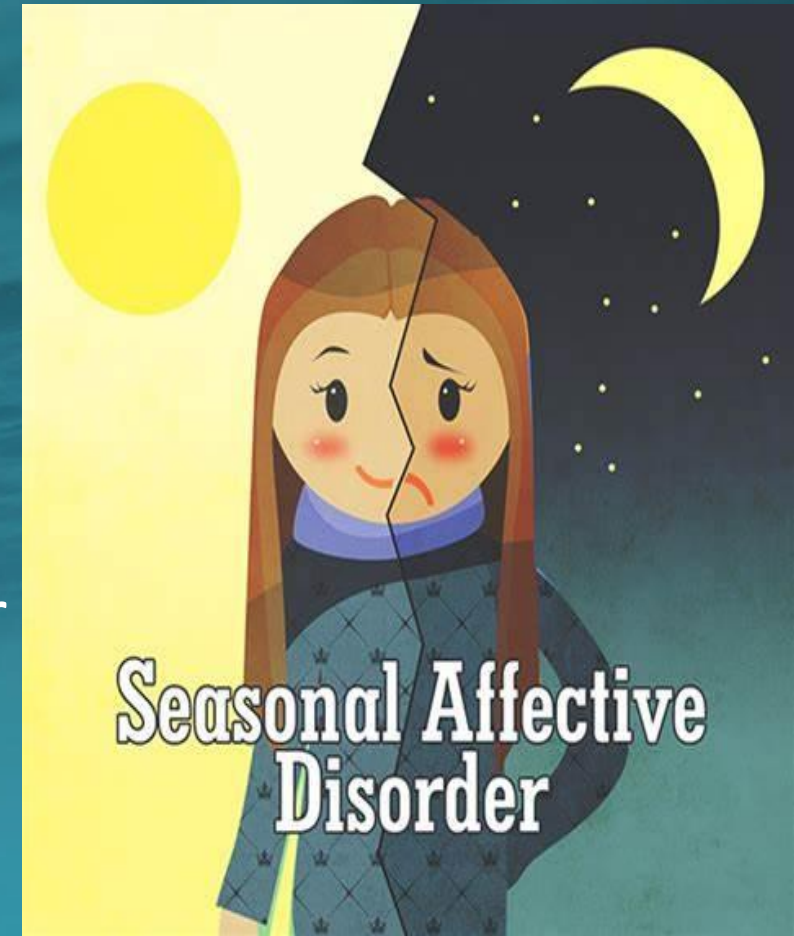


Give yourself permission to let it be a normal day.



DID YOU KNOW.....

- SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) is experienced by 1 out of 3 people (**10 million**) from October-April
- Often mistaken for Holiday Blues
- Symptoms are most severe in Dec., Jan. and Feb.
- Symptoms tend to resolve in spring and early summer
- In others, symptoms continue in spring and early summer then resolve in early fall due to hormonal changes



LACK OF PATIENCE / IRRITABILITY

ALWAYS FEELING TIRED

FEELING UNPRODUCTIVE / UNMOTIVATED

LETHARGY

FEELING SAD / DEPRESSED

SLEEP DISTURBANCES

DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING

SOCIAL WITHDRAWAL

WEIGHT GAIN / LOSS

FEELING OF HOPELESSNESS

REDUCED SEX DRIVE

CRAVING SUGAR / CARBOHYDRATES

SYMPTOMS OF SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER

How to Combat It

- Light therapy from a 10,000 lux light box or lamp for 30 minutes daily
- Daily walks or other exercise in the sunshine
- Consistent sleep regimen
- Healthy diet
- Consider interacting in a support group or psychotherapy
- Talking to your PCP about an antidepressant





8 Ways to Survive the Holidays and Stay Sober

Edgewood Treatment Center 1-800-683-0111 www.edgewood.ca @edgewoodaddictions



1

Set realistic goals and limits

Staying in recovery is your number one priority. Don't get distracted by someone else's expectations. Do what is best for you.

2

Stick with the basics

Get plenty of rest, eat three balanced meals a day and get some exercise to keep those endorphins happy. It's important to keep your blood sugar level balanced, and watch your smoking and coffee intake.

3

Stay connected

Stay in touch with others in recovery and family who make healthy choices. These are the people who understand and support you. Keep in touch with your sponsor.

4

Have an escape plan

There's nothing wrong with having an exit time from any gathering. If possible have your own transportation. If not, make sure you have our cell phone with you and a list of your sober friends that you can call if things get 'ansty'.



5

Create new ways to celebrate

Same old places and events can trigger negative urges, so plan some new activities. Tree trimming parties, ice skating or Christmas movies - anything to create new traditions.

6

Self-Care

Understand that this time of year might be an emotional time for you. Make practicing self-care a priority for you at this time. Stay mindful of when you begin to feel signs of anger or loneliness then take action to address these feelings.

7

Meetings, meetings, meetings

Recovery groups and AA/NA are a safe place for you to be so go to as many as you can. One recovery meeting a day is a really good idea. You'll be around people who share how you are feeling.

8

Do something nice for someone

Do something thoughtful for an elderly neighbour or a family member. Volunteering at a soup kitchen or wrap gifts for a non-profit. Check your local paper, many organizations are looking for helpers and get ready to roll up your sleeves.



restored
comfort
healing
well-ness
refresh
well-adjusted
health

balanced
flexibility
stress-free
Happy Holidays
rejuvenate

RESOURCES

- Suicide Crisis Lifeline: 988
- Crisis Text Line: Text “HELLO” to 741741
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: <https://www.nami.org/> 800-950-6264
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): For general information on mental health and to locate treatment services in your area, call **SAMHSA's National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357)**.
- Translifeline: is an option for transgender people seeking help in time of emotional crisis. <https://www.translifeline.org/> 877-565-8860
- Rape, Abuse & Incest Network: <https://rainn.org/> 800-656-4673
- LGBT National Help Center: <http://www.glbtnationalhelpcenter.org/>
- Veterans Crisis Line: Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and press 1 or text to 838255

