



7 Tips to Emotionally Prepare for the Holiday Season

Insights

By Gateway 2 Counseling

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By: Gateway2 Counseling
Gateway2Counseling.com

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

We hope this post helps you in whatever stage of life you are in and know that we are here for you.

If you desire help on your journey, we are always just a screen away here at Gateway 2 Counseling. We are your objective friend. You might be suffering from depression or just feeling overwhelmed with the daily struggles of life. It doesn't matter. We are here for one session or many. You decide.

You can reach us at www.gateway2counseling.com

Once again, thank you for joining us on this journey to a brighter tomorrow.

Thank you again!

The holidays can elicit so many emotions for us. Happiness, joy, jubilation...but how about anxiety? stress? overwhelm? sadness?

With the holidays can come a lot of pressure to entertain and perform. It can require a lot of energy to plan and participate. With the emotional highs can come the emotional lows so it is important to prepare for the holidays and have a game plan and be prepared.

Whether you find yourself dealing with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) like so many do for the holidays, or you are just feeling a little off, having a plan can help make the holidays much easier and much more enjoyable.

1. Stick to healthy habits

It can be easy to overindulge with the rest of the crowd during the holidays. However, one of the best things you can do to make sure you feel good, mentally and physically, during the holidays is to stick to your healthy habits.

Here are some tips:

- Make sure you have a good meal or snack before heading to a gathering.
- Maintain your workout schedule.
- Get enough sleep.
- Take time out to breathe, just be and breathe.

Reach out

You may be surprised at how many people are alone or feel depressed during the holidays. Reach out to those that uplift you or perhaps that you uplift and make a plan to get together during the holidays. This can be small or large, whatever makes you enjoy.

Here are some tips:

- Make a coffee date with a friend.
- Go to the gym once a week with a buddy.
- Plan a movie date to see a new movie!

Start with a therapist now

Finding a therapist now for a potential need during the holidays can relieve a lot of stress ahead of time. Starting to see a therapist now can help prepare you for the coming season and give you some tools that can help prepare you better for any down moments you may experience.

Take Vitamin D Supplements

With the weather getting colder and the sky becoming cloudier, many can experience vitamin d deficiencies. This lack of light can have many feeling more lethargic and down than usual. Adding vitamin d supplements into your normal routine can help to combat the negative effects of the winter weather.

Light therapy

Light therapy is one that mimics the outdoor light that you may be missing because of the winter weather. Participating in light therapy can cause a “chemical change in your brain that lifts your mood and relieves the symptoms of SAD”.

*Talk to your health care professional about your own light box options and recommendations.

Make a holiday to-do list

Sit down with a pen and paper and make a list of all the activities that you would like to do for the holiday season and make plans for them. This could include making cookies, listening to your favorite holiday music, watching your favorite holiday movie, or going ice skating.

Be Realistic

There can be a lot of pressure during the holidays on making them perfect. Remember that each holiday does not have to be like the last nor does it have to be like those in the holiday gift shop window. This might mean finding new food to make for the holidays, finding new ways to engage with relatives, and embracing new traditions of your own.

Additional tip:

Put down the phone. It is very tempting to want to see what others are doing on social media, however, comparing the highlights of their season with yours is not the healthiest. Feel free to take a break from social media and create your own highlight reel.

BONUS: Allow yourself to say no.

Sometimes saying yes to everything can leave you feeling rundown and overwhelmed. Find your own balance so that you can still do what makes you feel happy and feel calm. If there are engagements you can't miss out on, perhaps remove another engagement from your list to balance that time with you time.

Why say no when you *can* say yes?

Yes, you may have the time. Yes, your schedule. may be open. However, ask yourself if it is best for you. Make time to schedule time for you to mentally regroup and recharge before your next social outing.

“Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.” — Thich Nhat Hanh

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