

The Genesis Therapy Center

FALL 2016

I've Got the Holiday Blues

Rachael Sytsma, Psy.D

The holiday season is fast approaching and with it comes many emotions and experiences. While many people enjoy the festivities, gatherings, sparkling lights, and traditions, holidays can be stressful and even emotionally painful for others. You may recall feelings of excitement, happiness, fellowship, and harmony from years before and are eager to experience them again. However, our anticipation for the holidays can turn into feeling overwhelmed, stressed, anxious, and even depressed. In order to make the most of the holiday season and take care of yourself during a time of shortened days, cold weather, and extra activity, here are some tips to beat the holiday blues.

- 1) **Be realistic.** Be honest with yourself, and know your limitations in terms of scheduling activities and ability to attend to what you commit to. Being overbooked can lead to exhaustion, which makes people feel cranky, irritated and depressed. By knowing your limits, you can decide which tasks you want to take on and which things you can delegate.
- 2) **Don't stray too far from your routine.** Try to keep your normalcy by taking care of your mind and body as you typically would. Eating healthy (when you are not at festivities), exercising regularly, and taking time for self-care are just as important during the busy holiday season as they are any other time of the year.
- 3) **Manage your time.** Pace yourself this holiday season by creating a plan with a to-do list and set deadlines. Write everything down into your calendar so you have a visual reminder and goals you can cross off when accomplished. It feels so good crossing things off a list.
- 4) **Prioritize your activities and stick to them.** If you enjoy spending time with your family above spending time with your co-workers, don't commit to a work party taking place on the same day as your family gathering.
- 5) **Make a meaning for the season.** If you create an important meaning for yourself, the holidays can take a new shape. You may find that what is most important about the holidays is creating meaningful gifts for your loved ones or volunteering your time. Find your personal meaning and do things according to that meaning. It'll help you feel like you are "on the right track" and keep you focused on what matters most to you.
- 6) **Remember, you may not feel like you did when you were a kid.** Many people remember those feelings from when we were children and long for them to return to us as adults. Sometimes when we don't feel particularly happy or connected to others, we feel guilty. It is okay that the holidays do not automatically take away feelings of loneliness, sadness, frustration, anxiety and/or fear.

7) **Accept help from others.** You do not have to do everything by yourself. If you are entertaining, ask guests to bring their talents to the event by bringing a dish to pass or making decorations. If you have children and/or a partner, ask them to take care of smaller tasks that do not require your individualized attention.

8) **Plan unstructured, low-cost fun holiday activities.** So much of the season has become focused on financial contributions, and spending the most on high-priced gifts. This can become overwhelming and saddening, especially if money is tight. Plan activities that are free or involve little cost, such as window shopping downtown or driving through decorated neighborhoods. Get a little creative and it is easy to entertain yourself without having to spend a lot of money.

9) **Laugh at the little things.** Just like any normal day, there are going to be hiccups and headaches. Laugh at the little things. If you are feeling bogged down or overwhelmed, watch a comedy to recharge. Have your kids tell you their favorite jokes. Do something to make you laugh, even for a moment.

10) **Accept change and incorporate "newness" into the holidays.** Many people have suffered losses that are remembered during the holidays. If you have suffered a loss, consider changing your routine slightly as a way to honor and accept loss.

The Genesis Therapy
Center's

13th Annual

KidPower Benefit

Sunday, October 30, 2016

2 to 6pm at Gaelic Park in

Oak Forest

Aging

Mike Ideran M.Div., D.Min., LCPC, LMFT

The advantage that I have at this moment is that I am getting older. Interestingly, this is just like the rest of you. Aging is a process that takes place over yours and my lifetime. We cannot escape it and we cannot avoid it. We are going to get older and our bodies our going to reflect this very important process. I can no longer do many things that I used to do in my youth, although I now think that I am a little wiser and bit more sharp about some things that are fairly important in life. My wisdom is a powerful tool for me and for my family as we continue to make important decisions about the rest of my life and the continuing of my family.

My legacy is presently being established and recognized while I am alive. The way in which I handle the days that I am given is essential into how I am going to be remembered by those who care about me. Aging, while difficult on our bodies, is not so difficult on our minds. The beauty of thinking about all of the choices that I need to make so that my family continues with some integrity is important. In this way, I work at being with my family as often as I can and letting them know that I love them and want the best for them. I would suggest that you enjoy the aging process and know that this is another important part of your life to be addressed.

Have a good day.

Sleep Hygiene

In today's very busy world, sleep can at times be very elusive. Here are some tips to keep in mind to help sleep come easier.

- 1) Maintain a regular sleep routine.
- 2) Avoid naps if possible.
- 3) Bed is for sleeping and rest.
- 4) Create a comfortable sleeping environment.
- 5) Avoid caffeine and nicotine.
- 6) Avoid alcohol.
- 7) Exercise regularly.

Tanaka, H., Taira, K., Arakawa, M., Toguti, H., Urasaki, C., Yamamoto, Y., & ... Shirakawa, S. (2001). Effects of short nap and exercise on elderly people having difficulty in sleeping. *Psychiatry & Clinical Neurosciences*, 55(3), 173-174.

Dewald-Kaufmann, J., Oort, F., & Meijer, A. (2014). The effects of sleep extension and sleep hygiene advice on sleep and depressive symptoms in adolescents: a randomized controlled trial. *Journal Of Child Psychology & Psychiatry*, 55(3), 273-283.

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We are offering a Jr. High social skills support group in Oak Lawn

Please contact Dr. Rachael Sytsma at
708-423-3361, ext. 35

The Genesis Therapy Center

Administrative Office
6006 W. 159th Street
Oak Forest, IL 60452

Phone: (708) 535-7320
Fax: (708) 535-7571

We're on the Web!

Visit us at: <http://www.genesistherapy.org>

E-Mail: info@genesistherapy.org

Other Locations:

Schaumburg, IL
930 W. Higgins Rd.

Oak Brook, IL
2625 Butterfield Road,
Suite 138S

LaGrange, IL
14 W. Burlington Ave

Oak Park, IL
1010 Lake Street

Oak Lawn, IL
9411 S 51st Ave.

Oak Lawn, IL
5210 W. 95th Street