

FEB 2019 EAP NOTES: Don't be SAD

Top 5 Lifestyle Coping Methods



Brrrr...it's cold outside (REALLY COLD OUTSIDE). It's that time of year where the weather and constant cold can take its toll on you and your mental health. SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) is a type of depression that can cause increased anxiety, add stress, instigate feelings of isolation and can take over your life. There are ways to help deal with it so you can gather your inner strength and kick the winter blues to the curb. Here's 5 top lifestyle coping methods for dealing with SAD:

1. Exercise regularly

Exercising releases endorphins and brings positive feelings and increased energy. So, increasing exercise will increase strength, helping you feel good and healthy overall. Of course, exercising and eating well, will also help your entire body feel better.

2. Make social plans

It can be tempting to just plop on the couch and watch TV when you're experiencing SAD, but instead of hibernating, make plans with a friend to meet for coffee or catch up over appetizers or a meal. Get out of the house at least once a week, if not more. Planning activities with friends or family will lift your spirits.

3. Plan a trip

Plan a trip, go south to get a week of sunshine and warm weather—something that will lift your spirits while getting a tan. On top of the short burst of heat, planning a trip also gives you something to look forward to. Counting down the days until you get several relaxing, warm days of sunshine is a great motivator and way to improve your mood.

4. Soak up the sun as often as possible

There are quite a few days during the fall and winter months that you can layer up and spend time outside. Going outside and soaking up the rays whenever you can could help reduce your symptoms of SAD. Our bodies crave sunlight, so bundle up and head outside. You might even learn to appreciate the cooler temperatures.

5. Let the light in

Let daylight into your house wherever and whenever you can. Uncover your windows to let natural daylight shine through could give you the mood boost you need to get out of your funk. Sit near windows when you can, and don't close your blinds or drapes until the evening.

Accepting and embracing the daylight you're given could help you get past some of the symptoms you experience from SAD.

Sometimes small life changes are enough to pick someone up when they are feeling low, but it doesn't work for everyone. Seeing a counselor can get you to address any negative feelings and help change your perspective. Counseling also help you from falling into the same cycle in the years to come.

Best Care EAP counselors are here to help. To schedule your confidential appointment, call **(402) 354-8000** or **(800) 801-4182**, or send an email to eap@bestcareeap.org.



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