

Dealing with depression during Christmas season

The holidays are supposed to be a time of year when friends and family gather to enjoy each other's company. However, for some, the Christmas and New Year's holidays can be a time of anxiety, uncertainty and depression.

The reasons for such feelings can vary greatly depending on the individual. For some, the holidays act as a reminder of a lost loved one, while others simply struggle with the increased stress that comes with the season. Mental health associations across the country offer the following tips for coping with stress and depression during the holiday season.

- Focus on the big picture. Keep in mind that the holiday season is just that, a season.

Don't place all your focus on one day, such as Thanksgiving or Christmas. Lessen stress by spreading out activities and not placing too great an emphasis on a specific holiday.

- Don't use alcohol as a crutch. Far too many people turn to alcohol during the holiday season to calm nerves, or as the centerpiece of festivities. It's no coincidence that alcohol-related traffic accidents are at their highest during the holiday season. For those who are finding the holiday season especially difficult, alcohol should be avoided. It is a depressant and will only make matters worse.

- Don't repress certain feelings. Like any other season, the holiday season has room

for sadness. It's perfectly normal to feel sadness over a lost loved one during the holiday season. But sharing those feelings with others who miss the person as well can be a healthy form of coping. Even if you don't share those feelings, don't dwell on the person's absence, dwell on the good times you had with the person.

- Make time for yourself. The stress of the holiday season is thanks in large part to the busier schedule that comes with entertaining and shopping. But make sure that

schedule includes some time for you to recharge your batteries. Stay in and watch a movie, go for a walk, or just schedule an activity you can

enjoy that's free of stress.

- Surround yourself with loved one or caring people. Perhaps the best advice is not to suffer alone or in silence.

The holidays should not be a time of loneliness, so make an effort to spend more time with loved ones if you're feeling lonely or sad.



Spending time with friends and family can help

SEASON'S GREETINGS



During this holiday season and every day of the year, we wish you all the best.

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HOLIDAY HOURS:

Monday, Dec. 24 from 9am to 2pm

CLOSED Dec. 25 and 26. - Thursday, Dec. 27 from 8am to 5pm.

Friday, Dec. 28 from 9am to 5pm.

372 Queen St. E. Acton, **519-853-1300**