

Tips for Beating the Holiday Blues

If despite your best efforts to remain upbeat this holiday season, you find yourself down for a sustained period of time, get help. Don't try to "tough it out" alone. There are treatment options available to you that could make a significant difference in your life.

For patient inquiries, or to make an appointment with a St. Luke's psychotherapist or psychiatrist, call:

610-954-2400

- Acknowledge your feelings – it is normal to sense sadness and grief (particularly after a loss) – No one has to force themselves to be happy just because it is the holiday season!
- Seek support – family, friends, church, community groups, volunteering – no one has to be alone. It may at first seem hard but you will be surprised -- others like company too!
- When there are differing opinions, try to not personalize them
- If other relatives are sniping at each other, leave the room, take a walk or a deep breath or listen to some pleasant music -- whatever will "lighten" your space.
- Be understanding if others get upset or distressed
- Consider having a holiday meal out if tension is likely at the dining room table – people behave better and try to avoid a scene
- Stick to a budget and know your limits
- Plan your shopping and think about a gift with meaning (expensive gifts are not always the ones that mean the most)
- Shop early and watch for sales
- Don't overlook a special gift for yourself
- Delegate! Let others share in the responsibility of planning activities
- Plan ahead – set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting and other activities
- Learn to say "No" or "I just can't do that right now, let's figure out another time or project."
- Avoid being too ambitious – a gingerbread mansion would be just as fun to build on Valentine's Day!
- Go easy on alcohol (excessive drinking will only increase your feelings of depression). Better yet have a hot chocolate!
- Be realistic – families and traditions change – hold on to those you can and find new ways to celebrate
- Rethink resolutions – be realistic and make sure they are valuable
- Forget about perfection
- Stay flexible – physically and emotionally
- Seek professional help if needed
- Rein in your expectations and take a moment to appreciate the simple things!

