Dealing with the Post-Holiday Blues

By Dr. Lindsey Campos, EAP Manager

The holidays are over, the new year is here, and we have to go back to our regular routines. This time of year can be difficult for many people, due to the limited sunlight, cold weather, and having to return to our pre-holiday routines. While this time of year can definitely be a challenge, there are some simple things we can do to improve our mood and get through.

- **Get Out of the House, If Possible:** Being outdoors for at least 10 minutes a day can have a positive impact on your mood and help you to feel happier. If it’s too cold to be outside, find something you feel safe and comfortable doing inside, such as visiting a museum or checking out a new store you haven’t been to.

- **Plan Fun Activities to Look Forward to:** Start planning for the future! This doesn’t have to be something big, it can be as simple as planning a lunch with a friend, or planning an outing with your family or friends.

- **Explore New Areas:** There are many beautiful places to see and exciting things to do in and around Albuquerque. Plan a day trip to a new area of the city or the state that you’ve been wanting to explore but haven’t been to yet!

- **Get Some Exercise:** Getting daily exercise is helpful for improving your health, both physical and mental. Exercise is one of the best ways to improve your mood because your body releases endorphins when you exercise, and endorphins positively impact mood.

- **Eat Healthy and Stay Hydrated:** The holidays can be a time of indulgence, and the new year is a great time to improve our eating habits. Plan meals ahead, make sure you’re getting enough fruits and vegetables, and try and limit sugar and processed foods. Making small changes along the way can lead to developing healthy habits.
And make sure you’re drinking enough water, as well. Eating healthy and staying hydrated can help to have a positive impact on our overall mood.

- **Learn Something New or Try a New Hobby:** Many of us have a desire to learn something new, or to try a new hobby. Maybe you want to learn a new language, or try something crafty. This is the time to start! Find something you enjoy doing and dedicate some time to engaging in that activity.

- **Make a Vision Board:** Vision boards can be powerful tools for manifesting the things we want in our lives. Make a list of all the things you want to achieve, or goals you have for yourself in the future. Once you’ve done that, start creating your vision board. For tips on how to get started with this, click [here](#).

- **Set Realistic and Achievable Goals:** The beginning of the year is an excellent time to set new goals for yourself! Maybe you want to lose a few lbs., or maybe you want to save up for a vacation over the summer. Set some small, achievable goals for yourself and start working toward them!

- **Engage in a Gratitude Practice:** Gratitude is one of the most powerful ways to improve our outlook. Even when times are difficult, engaging in a regular gratitude practice can greatly improve our mood and our perception of the world around us. An easy way to do this is to make a short gratitude list on a regular basis (daily if you can). Keep a pad of paper and pen next to your bed and make a list of 5 things you’re grateful for each morning when you wake up.

- **Take Care of Your Living Space:** Putting the holiday decorations away can be a depressing task. But renewing your space might make you feel a bit better and feel a bit lighter. After you put away your holiday decorations, spend some time cleaning and de-cluttering your home. Maybe you have some new artwork or decorations that you received as gifts for the holidays that you can hang up or set out in order to make your home feel more comfortable and festive. Or maybe you’ve been wanting to rearrange your furniture or do some home renovation. Plan some time to clean up your space and make it feel comfortable.

- **Talk to Someone:** If you’re experiencing sadness, depression, anxiety, or other issues, find someone you trust to talk to. The Employee Assistance Program is also available to you and your eligible family members at no cost. To make an appointment to see a counselor, please call the main number at (505)768-4613.

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**Inspirational Quote:**

“For me, becoming isn’t about arriving somewhere or achieving a certain aim. I see it instead as forward motion, a means of evolving, a way to reach continuously toward a better self. The journey doesn’t end.” – Michelle Obama

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Thank you for reading! Please stay safe and healthy out there!