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Volume 8 - Issue 12 | New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services | December 2014

Holiday Blues

How to survive the holidays.

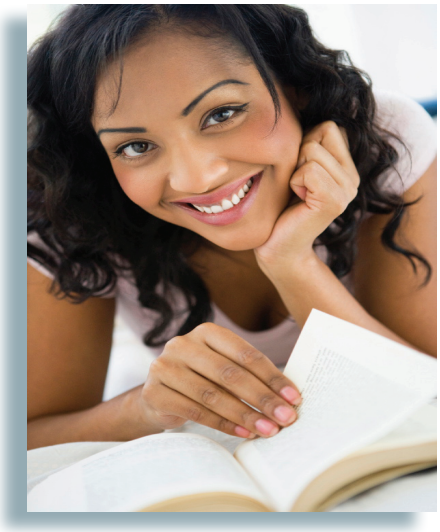
Has the holiday season arrived without you? Since we can't control the season's arrival, it's not unusual for adults to feel out-of-synch with the holiday crowd. These tips might help you pick up your spirits and see you through.

Start New Traditions

Since the carrying on of "tradition" is one of the hallmarks of the holidays, you might feel most acutely sad if it's not possible to carry out some of your usual traditions. If you've recently lost a loved one, if the holiday season is the anniversary of such a loss, or if your living situation has changed in the past year and you are away from loved ones, remember that you can start new holiday traditions. They may not seem like much at first, but if you are able to react them over the next few years, they will begin to feel comfortable.

Participate When You Can

If you're feeling blue, it's difficult to have much enthusiasm for social expectations such as gift-giving or party-going. Participate at a level that feels comfortable to you, but try not to isolate yourself entirely. A little participation might pick up your spirits.



Take Care of Yourself

Holiday media messages can be overwhelming at the height of the season. This might be a good time to spend evenings with a good book or quiet music instead of watching television. Write letters to friends and loved ones instead of sending cards. By staying involved in some activity you might find your mood lifting a little.

Volunteer Your Time

There are many social service programs for people in need over the holidays. Taking time to participate, if only for a few hours, can be a good way out of the holiday doldrums and help bring season's greetings to others.

Talk Things Out

Many adults experience holiday blues. If you're not able to compensate for it in some other way, or feel that the "blues" might be drifting into depression, get professional help through your physician or your community mental health agency.