

Mindful Publishing Presents

Holiday Blues Guide

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Dedication

This ebook is for all who seek solace during the Christmas season.

Introduction

By, Barbara Kilikevicius

When I first began to reach out to find some expert advice on Holiday Blues I was surprised by how many professionals had dealt with this on a year to year basis. My original intent was to add a small sub chapter in my book *A Mindful Christmas ~ How to Create a Meaningful, Peaceful Holiday*. After hearing from many experts I decided to put together this free guide for anyone that needs some relief now. If you suffer from the holiday blues or know someone that does then this guide is for you. Please feel free to print this out or send anyone our way via the website <http://www.amindfulchristmas.com> to download a free copy of this ebook themselves.

The over-commercialization and consumerism of Christmas has left us without meaning and without the connectedness that we long for. It has been replaced with Holiday Hysteria. As a result, many people dread the coming of what could be a joyful and uplifting season. Its no wonder so many people have diminished feelings, even depression surrounding this holiday with all of the obligations including the expense, the shopping, crowds, parties, and the list goes on. We have let our modern world take away the message of this holiday. Where is the meaning? Why go through all of this for one day? Most people feel terribly overwhelmed by this holiday. There is so much buildup just to be left feeling let down when it's over.

Done properly, the Christmas Holiday happens in the heart.

I have had many bouts with the holiday blues myself. Millions of people suffer from Holiday blues and even depression. That was one of the motivating factors in my writing *A Mindful Christmas*. I have heard year after year people complain about the over commercialization of Christmas and how advertising puts added pressure on us to be perfect and happy. And now we can add a financial crisis to the mix as well!

Whatever the reasons may be behind why you are feeling blue, take heart. Many of us are feeling this way. It's normal to feel down this time of year and there is help! I have included my personal resources at the end of this ebook to show you that there are many more ways to help yourself or someone you love.

My wish for this ebook is to bring hope to anyone that seeks it.

Be well!



Barbara Kilikevicius is passionate about putting the spirit back into Christmas. More importantly, she has lived her message. She became a single mother when she had three children under the age of six. Because money was tight and because she wanted to keep the true spirit of Christmas alive in her home, she created innovative ways to celebrate the season so that her children would learn to draw on its meaning rather than come to think of Christmas as just a day for receiving gifts. Many of the creative ideas in this book were born from those years in her life. Barbara is teaching and transforming the Christmas season through her book *A Mindful **Christmas*** from the typical holiday that is filled with anxiety, stress and commercialism, to one that is filled with nurturing, inner reflection and spirituality. Mindful Publishing is releasing the book, which is also available online at www.amindfulchristmas.com. It is the first in a series of Living Mindfully books by **Barbara Kilikevicius**.

Eliminate Depression Naturally! Depression is NOT a Prozac Deficiency

By Jacob Teitelbaum MD

Holiday blues are a common problem. With many people already being under enormous stress, we are now told we are supposed to come up with even more money to buy useless presents. In addition, there are extra demands on our time to create a joyful holiday setting. Put this on top of working full time while caring for kids (and perhaps even a disabled relative) and you're entitled to feel stressed and depressed. For others, who already suffer from loneliness, the media impression that we should be surrounded by happy family around the holidays adds to feeling isolated (if it's any comfort, most family get togethers are pretty dysfunctional and wacky).

Some quick solutions?

1. **Start by turning off the TV** when watching stuff that doesn't FEEL good (that is what the remote is for). The images on TV are based mostly on what people selling stuff want you to think. Go back to basics. What would really feel good to you to occur during the holidays (you might be surprised that it is simply time to rest and read a book). Then give yourself the OK to create that.

2. **Quick Quiz...**

Do all the presents you get give you enough pleasure to justify the hassle of gift shopping for others? For most of you, the answer is no. I propose that the buying of presents be limited to spoiling YOUR children as much as possible and buying a gift for your mate. Beyond that, for the rest of the family, Co-workers, and maybe groups of friends, invite each group to do a "Secret Santa" approach where each person buys one gift for 1 member of that group or family and give a price limit for what the gift can cost. So if you have 15 family members, you buy (and receive) only 1 gift instead of 15. When this is proposed, most of the group will breath a sigh of relief.

In addition, here are some quick fixes:

1. **Go outside for a walk.** Walking has been shown to be as effective as Prozac. In addition, sunshine raises both Serotonin (the "happiness molecule") and Vitamin D (which tends to be low in winter).
2. **Vitamin C** -- Not the one Linus Pauling talked about, but rather C for Chocolate. Eat dark chocolate, which will raise energy (it has "theobromine" in it) and make you feel happier (it has a natural antidepressant called PEA). It also tastes good and is high in antioxidants.
3. **Fish** -- especially salmon and tuna. Your brain is main of fish oils, and fish oil has been shown to be an effective antidepressant.
4. **Nutritional support.** Our diet gets worse around the holidays, and deficiencies of B vitamins and magnesium aggravate fatigue and depression. I recommend optimal overall nutritional support with a good vitamin powder (I recommend the Energy Revitalization System by Enzymatic Therapy). For a real energy kick that tastes good, add Ribose (a special sugar) 1 scoop (5 gms) 3 x day. Our recent study showed that Ribose increased energy levels an average of 45%! In my practice I use Corvalen, but any brand is OK.

Some Other Key Points

Let's look at both the physical and psycho-spiritual components—which is a good approach for any illness.

From a psychological perspective, depression usually represents repressed anger which has been turned inward. This is why choosing to allow yourself to be angry or even to sometimes go into a rage can be healthy when you're depressed—even if the people around you don't like it. You can tell when the anger is healthy because it will feel good. Remember though, that you are *choosing* to be angry, and what you are angry about is nobody else's fault (so don't beat up others with your anger). When you don't allow guilt to get in the way, notice how your depression decreases and you feel better after a good fit of anger!

My book "[*Three Steps to Happiness—Healing through Joy*](#)" discusses the three steps that psycho-spiritually will help you to get past depression and leave you feeling great. These are:

1. Feel all of your feelings without the need to understand or justify them. When they no longer feel good, let go of them.
2. Make life a "no-fault" system. This means *No Blame, No Fault, No Guilt, No Judgment, and No Expectations* on yourself or anyone else. This means you'll be changing habits of thinking. For example, if you find yourself judging somebody, simply drop the judgment in mid-thought when you notice it. And no judging yourself for judging others!
3. Learn to keep your attention on what feels good. We sometimes are given the misconception that keeping attention on problems is more realistic. That is nonsense! Life is like a massive buffet with thousands of options. You can choose to keep your attention on those things that feel good. You'll notice that if a problem truly requires your attention at any given time, it will feel good to focus on it. Otherwise, you're living your life as if you have 200 TV channels to choose from, and you only choose to watch the ones you don't like!

From a physical perspective, depression often reflects faulty biochemistry. Begin by asking yourself this simple question—"Do I have many interests?" If the answer is yes, you're probably not depressed but rather have other physical problems causing how you feel. Common causes would include poor sleep, infections, thyroid and other hormonal deficiencies (despite normal blood tests!) and nutritional deficiencies. For more information on treating these areas, see www.vitality101.com or my book "[*From Fatigued to Fantastic!*](#)" This is especially important to do if you have a combination of exhaustion, poor sleep, and in many cases widespread achiness. If this is so, you may well have chronic fatigue syndrome/fibromyalgia—for which effective treatment is now available—and not depression. If you do not have many interests, you probably are depressed and the treatments we discuss will be very helpful for you. Fortunately, depression is very treatable. For more detailed information, see http://www.endfatigue.com/health_articles_d-e/Depression-eliminate_depression_naturally.html

To paraphrase the Mastercard/Visa commercials:

1. Benefits of Prozac and prescription antidepressants... Prozac is only about 10% more effective than placebo .
2. Side effects... Despite 90% of the benefit coming from the placebo effect, most of the side effects come from the medication. These include loss of libido, weight gain, emotional flattening, and sometimes becoming downright suicidal (and perhaps even homicidal).
3. Getting back your full and happy feelings and your lost libido when you're able to wean off the Prozac, *priceless*...

About The Author

Jacob Teitelbaum, MD is Medical Director of the Fibromyalgia and Fatigue Centers (www.fibroandfatigue.com). Senior author of the landmark studies "Effective Treatment of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Fibromyalgia -- a Placebo-controlled Study" & "Effective Treatment of CFS & Fibromyalgia with D-Ribose". Author of the best-selling book "From Fatigued to Fantastic!" (Penguin/Avery 2007), "Three Steps to Happiness! Healing through Joy", and "Pain Free 1-2-3 A Proven Program for Eliminating Chronic Pain Now" (McGraw Hill, 2006). He does numerous media appearances, including CNN and FOX National News and is a frequent guest on Oprah and Friends with Dr. Oz.

See www.Vitality101.com

Say Goodbye to Holiday Blues

and Hello to Inner Peace with EFT

By Nicolas Ortner and Jessica Ortner

What is EFT?

Millions of people are settling for lives filled with poor health and emotional baggage. Not knowing how to achieve the joyful and satisfying lives they desire, they're stuck accepting a lifestyle of emotional trauma, chronic physical pain, compulsions and addictions, or perhaps just an empty feeling inside.

The Holiday season has a way of bringing that which you are not happy with up to the front of your mind. Coming up to the new year you may reevaluate your life and not like what you find. Being surrounded by relatives can bring up issues you have held close since childhood. Your back pain may flair up as you run around to get everything done. A time meant to cherish and celebrate becomes a time to feel sad or stressed.

If you're like many people, you feel trapped, caught in this cycle. You're tired of feeling sad, depressed, anxious, discontent, and unwell. You're sick of the expensive and ineffective treatments. You're fed up with relinquishing the power over your health and happiness to psychologists and doctors. You'd like to grow, flourish, and thrive, putting the past in the past. You want to be your best, living a life that is filled with peacefulness, joy, and fulfillment, from day to day and moment to moment.

With EFT, you can do that. You can discover the vital secret for emotional wholeness and physical relief. You can take your physical and emotional well-being into your own hands. It's simple for anyone to master, and it's free.

EFT provides relief from chronic pain, emotional problems, disorders, addictions, phobias, post traumatic stress disorder, and physical diseases. While EFT is newly set to revolutionize the field of health and wellness, the healing concepts that it's based upon have been in practice in Eastern medicine for over 5,000 years. Like acupuncture and acupressure, EFT is a set of techniques, which utilize the body's energy meridian points. You can stimulate these meridian points by tapping on them with your fingertips – literally tapping into your body's own energy and healing power.

Your body is more powerful than you can imagine... filled with life, energy, and a compelling ability for self-healing. With EFT, you can take control of that power.

So how does EFT work?

The cause of ALL negative emotions is a disruption in the body's energy system." -Gary Craig, founder of EFT.

This fundamental principle is the basis of EFT. All negative emotions are felt through a disruption of the body's energy. And physical pain and disease are intricately connected to negative emotions. Health problems create feedback – physical symptoms cause emotional distress, and unresolved emotional problems manifest themselves through physical symptoms. So, the body's health must be approached as a whole. You cannot treat the symptoms without addressing the cause, and vice-versa.

The body, like everything in the universe, is composed of energy. Restore balance to the body's energy, and you will mend the negative emotions and physical symptoms that stem from the energy disruption. EFT restores the body's energy balance, and negative emotions are conquered.

The basic technique requires you to focus on the negative emotion at hand: a fear or anxiety, a bad memory, an unresolved problem, or anything that's bothering you. While maintaining your mental focus on this issue, use your fingertips to tap 5-7 times each on 12 of the body's meridian points. Tapping on these meridian points – while concentrating on accepting and resolving the negative emotion – will access your body's energy, restoring it to a balanced state.

You may be wondering about these meridians. Put simply, energy circulates through your body along a specific network of channels. You can tap into this energy at any point along the system.

This concept comes from the doctrines of traditional Chinese medicine, which referred to the body's energy as "chi." In ancient times, the Chinese discovered 100 meridian points. They also discovered that by stimulating these meridian points, they could heal. Call it energy, call it the Source, call it life force, call it chi... Whatever you want to call it, it works.

In some ways, EFT is similar to acupuncture. Like EFT, acupuncture achieves healing through stimulating the body's meridians and energy flow. However, unlike EFT, acupuncture involves needles! "No needles" is definitely one of the advantages of EFT.

Acupuncture also takes years to master. Acupuncture practitioners must memorize hundreds of meridian points along the body; the knowledge and training take years to acquire.

EFT is simple and painless. It can be learned by anyone. And you can apply it to yourself, whenever you want, wherever you are. It's less expensive and less time consuming. It can be used with specific emotional intent towards your own unique life challenges and experiences. Most importantly, it gives you the power to heal yourself, putting control over your destiny back into your own hands.

Basic EFT Sequence for Holiday Blues

As discussed, EFT can be used for everything- try it on everything! You can use it during the crazy holiday season and every day after that to help your feel balanced and strong. In this example, we'll focus on general anxiety over the holidays. Try it now with this initial sequence. Here's how a basic EFT sequence works:

- 1. Identify the problem you want to focus on.** It can be general anxiety, or it can be a specific situation or issue, which causes you to feel anxious.
- 2. Consider the problem or situation.** How do you feel about it right now? Rate the intensity level of your anxiety, with zero being the lowest level of anxiety and ten being the highest.
- 3. Compose your set up statement.** Your set up statement should acknowledge the problem you want to deal with, then follow it with an unconditional affirmation of yourself as a person. Here are some examples:

"Even though I feel this anxiety, I deeply and completely accept myself."

"Even though I'm anxious because there is too much to do, I deeply and completely accept myself."

"Even though my relatives are driving me crazy, I deeply and completely accept

myself."

"Even though I panic when I think about _____, I deeply and completely accept myself."

"Even though I'm worried about how everyone will get along, I deeply and completely accept myself."

"Even though I don't have what I want, I deeply and completely accept myself."

4. Perform the set up.

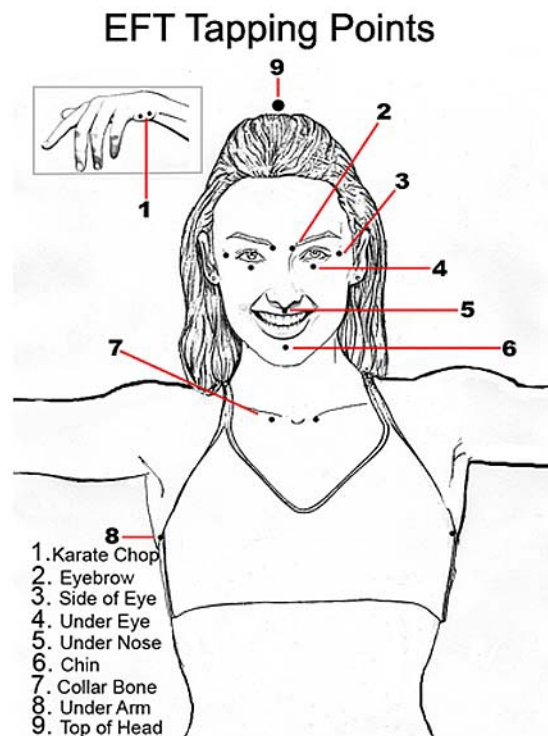
With four fingers on one hand, tap the Karate Chop point on your other hand. The Karate Chop point is on the outer edge of the hand, on the opposite side from the thumb.

Repeat the set up statement three times aloud, while simultaneously tapping the Karate Chop point. Now take a deep breath!

5. Use a reminder phrase.

As you tap on the rest of the nine points (shown on the diagram on the next page) use the reminder phrase. Simply focus on the feelings you have by stating the problem in as much detail. For example, *"This sadness about being alone during the holidays,"* *"Feeling hurt by _____."* Say a simple reminder phrase to focus on the problem as you tap.

Now, tap 5-7 times each on the nine points in the following sequence:



Now take another deep breath!

Congratulations! You've completed your first EFT sequence.

To learn more about EFT, order *Try It On Everything*, a documentary film that puts EFT to the test, while teaching you how you can use this technique to improve your life. The film features such respected experts as Jack Canfield, Joe Vitale, Cheryl Richardson, Bob Proctor, Dr. Joe Mercola, Dr. Bruce Lipton and many more.

Visit us at www.TryItOnEverything.com

Make sure to get our Free E-book: **15 Ways to Health Happiness and Abundance**

To hear free interviews with EFT experts, visit www.eft-revealed.com

About The Authors

Brother-sister duo **Nicolas and Jessica Ortner** hit the personal development scene with a bang when they released their breakthrough documentary about EFT. Never before had anyone put EFT to the test and documented the results in a way that was educational and inspiring. *Try It On Everything* has been sold in over ten countries. Nicolas and Jessica both live in Connecticut and continue to spread the powerful message of EFT.

Post Holiday Blues

By, Susan Dunn, MA

"You gotta pay the price," one of my clients is always telling me. She's referring to what is a law of physics, and also the way things work – what goes up must come down.

The higher your Christmas, the more exciting, chaotic and tumultuous, the more likely you'll be tumbling down just as far. Why? According to psychoneuroimmunologist (big word meaning the effect of brain and emotions on health, i.e., immunology), Paul Pearsall, Ph.D., our smart bodies want to establish equilibrium. Picture a graph on a midline. The midline is calm, routine. We can get very happy and go up; or very unhappy and go down. Therefore, if our emotions go way up, there will come a time when our inner wisdom brings us down low, so we settle back into that middle space.

Does this mean if you have a terrible grief or depression, you can expect to be that happy at some time in the future? I've seen it happen. It's a tenet of Emotional Intelligence that if you don't fully experience one emotion, you stuff down ALL emotions. In other words, if you face grief and go through it, not around it, you will carve out a space to be filled with happiness. If you don't, you shut down, and become numb, in which case you don't feel the bad, but you also don't feel the good, and greatly limit your experience of life.

So, if you're having a "down" period now what do you do? First of all, accept it. You can last it out. To speed it on its way:

- 1. Get active.** Exercise an extra hour. It creates physical energy, it clears the mind, and flushes out toxic emotions. Do it especially if you don't feel like it.
- 2. If you're an introvert you may prefer meditation, yoga or Tai Chi.**
- 3. Clean your house from top to bottom, doing the physical work yourself.** Do it like a ritual, that is, with meaning. This is to get rid of the yuck, and make room for the sunshine. This is a tradition in many cultures at the New Year for a reason – because of what we're all going through right now! Throw stuff out, sweep toward the doors, vacuum then take the bag out and dump it in the garbage, wash the furniture with something like Murphy's soap.
- 4. Accept quiet times and go with the flow.** Curl up by the fire and read good books. Coddle yourself with extra long baths with special lotions. Get your nails done. Get massages. Fix yourself a warm breakfast. It's kind of a hibernating time anyway.
- 5. Jump-start your thinking brain.** Start a new course. If you're an extrovert, go to community ed classes. If you're an introvert, enjoy yourself on the Internet with distance learning courses and take teleclasses.
- 6. Start a new intellectual project at work and at home.** Start a new physical project at home - build a greenhouse, paint the spare bedroom.
- 7. Start anything new** – new health club, new piano lessons, coaching, fencing lessons, new hairstyle, new friendship, new career.

8. If you live in an area where this is high allergy-time (such as Texas), make adjustments to your diet, because it's cumulative - pollen PLUS diet PLUS dust and mold inside your house. Clean your air ducts.

9. Laugh. One simple exercise is to put a pencil in your teeth crosswise. This makes the muscles of your face into a smile, and this helps our bodies. It gives us the same great relief a good laugh does.

10. Don't fight it. There is no need to appear "Miss Congeniality" when you aren't feeling that way. It's okay to be in a quiet place.

Also, because this is the peak of SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), get more sunshine. Exercise outside. Take a Caribbean cruise. When the sun crosses the bed in the spare bedroom, go lie down and soak up the rays.

Change is the only thing that stays constant, so know that your mood will eventually find its place. If you are seriously depressed, check with your personal health care professional.



Susan Dunn, M.A. (<http://www.susandunn.cc/>), individual coaching, coach certification program, ebooks and seminars for mindful living and success.

Dr. Josh's Tip - Managing Holiday Blues

By, Joshua C. Klapow, Ph.D.

Each year millions of Americans experience the holiday blues.

The holiday blues can be triggered by a number of things, the anniversary of a loss of a loved one, old memories, old conflicts, the stress of overspending, even the awareness of aging. On top of that, we generally, during the holidays do a poor job eating, sleeping, and exercising, which can contribute to the blues. The blues are different than clinical depression. They are less severe and time limited.

Simple Actions to Manage the Blues

1. Establish realistic goals and expectations for the holiday season, and do not label the holiday season as a time to cure all past problems.
2. Do not feel obliged to feel festive all of the time. If you have recently experienced a tragedy, death, or romantic break-up, tell people about your needs.
3. Try to plan some activities that **you** enjoy, and contact friends and family members with whom **you** want to spend time.
4. Take care of your health, get plenty of sleep, eat nutritiously, and stay physically active. Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. .

How to Help Others with the Blues

1. Express your concern and ask how you can help. Just being concerned and offering to help is very important as it is giving social support.
2. Try to involve the person in holiday activities, but don't be forceful. The more you push the more they may resist.
3. Check in phone calls and visits, even if they are very brief. The frequent contact can really help
4. Let the person know it's OK not to feel festive all of the time. That feeling down doesn't necessarily mean the holidays are ruined.
5. Finally, be a good listener. Sometimes just listening without offering advice can go a long way.

For some individuals the holidays can bring on a more serious condition; clinical depression. If you or some one you know doesn't seem able to shake the blues after a few weeks, then look for 5 or more of these symptoms:

Symptoms of Depression

- Disturbed sleep (sleeping too much or too little)
- Changes in appetite (weight loss or gain)
- Irritability and intolerance

- Loss of interest or pleasure
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Difficulties with concentration or decision making
- Marked restlessness or slow movement
- Hopeless, or feeling that life is not worth living
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide

If five or more of these symptoms are there for more than 2 weeks then it is important to contact a physician or a mental health professional. Depression is a very serious but manageable condition.

For more information visit: www.drjoshk.com



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Try My Good News Philosophy

By, Geri Weis-Corbley

I have two rituals at the end of every year. One of these helps me to feel better about myself. The other helps me to feel better about the world. These traditions are part of my **"Good News Philosophy"**, which focuses me on the positive aspects of whatever is in front of me.

First, I always like to take stock at the end of the year by looking back at the high points. Try this exercise: Look back on your year, and decide which three things make you most proud of yourself. These can be accomplishments, decisions, or actions taken... whatever makes you most proud of being who you are. Write these three things in a journal and call it your annual "Tah-da" list.

Second, in my role as managing editor of the Good News Network (a positive news Website I founded 11 years ago), I always create an annual list designed to help anyone beat the holiday blues.

At the end of every year I look back and pick the top 10 "good news" stories of the year. I pick the best stories from the news – ones that have uplifted and inspired.

This year, after a season of holiday hoopla -- especially if your moods are blue -- try this proven method of injecting hope and enthusiasm for life: Read the Top 10 Good News of 2008.

Why is good news a perfect antidote for the holiday blues?

These days we've heard a lot of doom and gloom forecasting coming from the media that can make us want to hide our head under our pillow, like the CNN broadcast that declared a "nightmare" was ensuing on Wall Street, with record drops for stocks on the Dow enough to cause overseas markets to have "sleepless nights".

With anti-depression drugs already being over-prescribed in the last few years, many Americans can ill afford to have even more bad news dumped on their doorstep.

More and more research these days points to the real connection between our health and what we believe about the world around us. One study from Harvard University a few years ago demonstrated there is a link between optimism and a lower rate in heart disease and lung problems in people over the age of 62.

How can people remain optimism if the only news they hear is bad news?

I believe people are starving for good news. That's why Websites like the Good News Network always experience massive spikes in traffic on days when world news stories turn too dire.

People inherently reach out for relief -- of any kind -- in an effort to return to any feelings that produce well-being in the body and contentment in the mind.

The day after the worst Wall Street tumble in history, the markets surged back up to deliver their fifth-highest-ever daily gain. But, did people hear this on their nightly newscast? Probably not.

We didn't hear, for instance, in the midst of the negative news frenzy, that nations around the globe actually raised 16 billion dollars to care for the world's poorest families and pledged 4.5 billion to send to school 24 million children; or that a fast food giant donated \$80 million to feed school kids around the world; or that malaria (the world's biggest killer of children) is further down the road to eradication thanks to a \$3 billion influx of cash that same week.

I believe the good news **is** out there, and it is up to us to feed our souls with news stories that make us happy and news coverage of events that make us proud to be living at this moment in history.

Desiring some good news is not sticking your head in the sand. It's raising it up to get a little sun. And when you do, your body feels a little lighter, your heart beats a little stronger, and your day is going to be a lot brighter.

Because, as it turns out, life isn't worth living if all you hear is the bad news.



Geri Weis-Corbley is editor of the Good News Network.

Her "**Top 10 Good News Stories of 2008**" will be published on Christmas Eve at www.goodnewsnetwor.org -- Sign up for a free weekly e-mail featuring the Top 10 Good News of the week.

The Truth About SAD

By, Dr. Joe Ciloni

Most people can recognize and have experienced the common symptoms of depression to some degree. Some of these include feeling sad, tired, irritable, having difficulty sleeping, increased or decreased appetite, low energy, and difficulty concentrating. In more severe cases feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and worthlessness, significant weight changes, and thoughts of suicide prevail.

There are many different types of "depression," and most people often hear a lot of names to go along with them like "Major Depression," "Clinical Depression," "Manic Depression," and "Seasonal Affective Disorder." These titles can be really confusing for the average person.

The term Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is actually not an official diagnosis used by experienced mental health professionals. All official diagnoses used in mental health are featured in a manual called the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, or the DSM-IV for short. If you looked inside the DSM-IV, you won't find anything called "Seasonal Affective Disorder."

What you will find is something called a "Seasonal Pattern Specifier" that can be used with almost all of the different types of clinical depression diagnoses like Major Depression, or the less serious version of depression called Dysthymic Disorder.

Simply put, the seasonal pattern specifier or SAD just means that the depressive symptoms like the ones listed above regularly appear or intensify significantly when the winter months approach, and disappear or diminish considerably with the start of Spring and Summer. The number of symptoms and level of intensity can vary drastically from person to person. The thing that most distinguishes SAD is correlation with the change in seasons.

The closer a person lives to the equator, the less is the likelihood they will develop depressive symptoms with the SAD pattern during the winter months. A person might be without any symptoms while living in Florida or California, and then begin to experience depressive symptoms during winter months after a move to somewhere less temperate.

Distance from the equator is only one of the known risk factors for depressive symptoms with the SAD pattern. One in every ten people will develop depressive symptoms with the SAD pattern in their lifetime. Women are four times more likely than men to have this problem. SAD rates are also very high in people who work night and evening shifts and sleep during the day time hours, and also in people who work for extended periods without exposure to sunlight like miners or submarine crews. People with a history of alcohol abuse and mood disorders are also at greater risk, as are people who have close family members with a history of these issues.

Researchers have also found that people suffering from depressive symptoms with the SAD pattern are frequently distinguished by some other factors. Lethargy and depressed mood tend to be the primary symptoms experienced by people with SAD. Mild to moderate anxiety, feelings of lack of control, hopelessness, and tenuous self-esteem are also common. SAD is also associated with a heightened sensitivity to pain. For example, the pain of a common headache or discomfort related to PMS can often be intensified in people suffering from depression with the SAD pattern.

There is an additional interesting difference between classic depressive symptoms and depressive symptoms with a SAD pattern when it comes to appetite. SAD pattern depressive symptoms are commonly associated with increased hunger, weight gain, and increased cravings for carbohydrates,

especially sweets. Classic depressive symptoms are often associated with decreased hunger and appetite.

Researchers at the National Institute of Mental Health have strong evidence linking depressive symptoms with the SAD pattern directly to light exposure. These findings have led to great success in treatment. Light Therapy (or Phototherapy) has been very successful in treating depression with the SAD pattern of symptoms. Up to eighty percent of people suffering from depressive symptoms with the SAD pattern experience marked alleviation of symptoms after as little as four days of exposure to full-spectrum light for only one to two hours a day.

Full-spectrum bulbs can be found in most hardware stores. Be sure that the strength of full-spectrum bulbs must be a minimum of 2,500-lux. Light Therapy treatment has proven effective in reducing appetite, weight gain, and food cravings, as well as elevating mood and improving sleep habits. Be warned though, that most people using Light Therapy experience a return of symptoms within days of stopping treatment. Consistency is the best strategy for most people wanting maximum symptom relief. Keep in mind, also, that making a point to be outside or exposed to natural sunlight when it's available during the winter months can be just as effective. Keep your shades open on sunny winter days, and get outside for a walk or sit by a brightly lit window whenever you can.

Be sure to talk about whatever symptoms you might be experiencing with a qualified health care professional. And let the sun—or full-spectrum bulbs—shine in!



Dr. Joe Cilona is a 39-year-old psychologist, personal coach, and author based in New York City. His progressive philosophy and innovative methods empower some of today's most successful and distinguished creative artists, entertainers and urban professionals. Dr. Cilona developed inventive psychotherapeutic techniques integrating the messages of Kahlil Gibran's 1923 classic book *The Prophet* in therapy. His book based on this work is titled *The Path: Life explained in 100 pages*, and features favorite text quotes chosen by diverse notables such as Former President Jimmy Carter, Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, Dr. Jack Kevorkian, and Naomi Campbell.

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Beating the Blues: Making Your Holiday's Enjoyable

By, Dan Reidenberg, Psy.D.

Myth, folklore and mystery surround the "Holiday Blues." Does depression really increase over the holidays? Are there really more suicides at the end of the (calendar) year? Do families really cause this problem or is this all just stories that are passed on from one generation to the next? Maybe it's all just stress that causes holiday blues?

The truth is that depression and other brain illnesses happen every day all year long. The truth is that according to the Centers for Disease Control, there is a suicide in this country every 16.6 minutes and that the lowest numbers of suicides occur in November and December. But this doesn't mean that people don't feel down, depressed or blue during the holidays, because sometimes they do.

Some people are at greater risk of developing depression. Those living with or having a history of mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders are at greater risk when stress levels are higher. Those who have limited or no support systems (family, friends) and those who have little or no access to health care are also at greater risk during stressful times. Facing financial hardship also increases someone's risk of depression and holiday blues.

Some causes of the holiday blues:

1. Seeing family-everyone has someone (often more than just 1 person) in their family that they don't like, can't get along with and/or that just irritates them even when they've done absolutely nothing wrong or to them. Sometimes it's old baggage, disputes or estrangement that gets brought to the surface during family holiday gatherings.
2. Pressure-did you buy the right gifts, did you spend the "right" amount of money, many demands from multiple sources.
3. Time-how will you get it all in, can you see everyone that wants to see you and that you want to see, will you get enough sleep (or return after the holidays feeling exhausted). Worry over what piles up and will be waiting for you after the holidays at work often raises stress levels.
4. Expectations-you set them for yourself, family has them of you; your spouse or significant other has them too. Are any of them realistic? Not being with family as you are used to and newly blended families can cause the blues too.
5. Marking of time/anniversaries-holidays are often difficult after a death, divorce or separation, and can be particularly difficult for those who are passing life milestones (e.g. Retirement).

Are there things that can keep us from getting blue during the holidays? Sure there are! Ten ways to beat the blues and enjoy the holidays:

1. Be smart. Everyone else might be exactly the same as they've always been, but you don't have to be and you don't have to go into the holidays the same. Evolve, learn something new and take that with you this year! Share it with others and lead the way to self-improvement.
2. Be careful. Keep as much of a routine as possible, moderate your alcohol intake, moderate your eating and try to exercise. Never drink and drive.
3. Be prepared. If you know something "ugly" is going to surface, be prepared for that. Know what your response will be, plan for this and set clear boundaries and limits for yourself in terms

of how much of it you will engage in. Also, be prepared to be in chaos mode, this will help keep you going knowing that it's going as you knew it would be.

4. Find time for yourself. These are your holidays too, there is nothing to say that you can't take an hour or so each day to reflect, regroup and enjoy the time alone or doing something you want to.
5. Make and relive memories. Relive as many happy and fun times as possible. They are the history of our lives, so bring up funny stories, exciting or memorable gifts to the conversation. Make sure you also recognize the new memories made each year and add them to that list. Don't overlook small things-they can be the best way to preserve something someone did.
6. Keep everything in perspective. Life is short, very short. Remember that whatever has happens or happened will soon pass you and it will see, feel, and be very different in an hour, for sure in a day. Try to stay outside of the craziness of families and inside of the wonders that make us all human. A reality check that food, family, homes, health, friends, faith are things you have or can get helps keep perspective.
7. Do something good for someone else. If you do nothing else on this list, make sure this is the one you do! There is no better way to beat the blues than to do something for someone else. It will do even more for you if you do something for someone less fortunate than you. Send an anonymous card to a sick child, serve a meal at a homeless shelter, and make a dish you know someone doesn't have time to. If you are really courageous, ask your family to pick one charity every year and have everyone bring a check for that charity. All nonprofit organizations will appreciate it, whether it is \$1.00 or more.
8. Do something unique or special for everyone in your family. This should be the second most important thing you do this holiday season to beat the blues. Rather than necessarily spending a lot of money, really put some thought into what you can give each person that is personal and from your heart. Give those closest to you something that means something to you, it will mean even more to them that you gave it to them!
9. Be realistic. Know that the blues do happen and depression can set in. Depression is a medical disease that has biological, genetic, environmental causes, social and psychological causes. It won't magically just go away because you are with family – you need to keep taking your meds – and it isn't just going to set in because you are with your family. Be realistic about the disease vs. just feeling the normal stresses of holidays.
10. Make things be about the holidays. The holidays are a time to celebrate. They don't have to be about a person, an old issue or even a family tradition that you might not like or understand. Every day of your life is a chance to give, work, play, learn, survive and thrive. The holidays offer us a brief moment to share some of the things we call life that make it all worth it with those who mean the most to us.

It is also good to know that if things are just too tough, too painful or you can't seem to get through there is help and there is hope. With a proper diagnosis and treatment plan, depression can go away. If you or someone you know might be depressed and you want more information on it or how to help, go to www.save.org If you need to talk with someone right away you can always call 1-800-273-TALK and they will help with information, resources and referrals. Healing and recovery from depression is possible. During the holidays see the hope all around you and start your healing process right now .



Dan Reidenberg, Psy.D. is the Executive Director of SAVE - Suicide Awareness Voices of Education, a national nonprofit working to prevent suicide and educate about depression. He is a Certified Master Therapist, Diplomat and Fellow of the American Psychotherapy Association currently serving as Chair of the APA Board and Chair of the Relationship Specialists Board. Dr. Reidenberg's background includes working extensively with adolescents and adults who are mentally ill and chemically dependent in a variety of in-patient, out-patient, day-treatment and residential programs. He is a frequently requested national speaker and an often cited resource for media on a variety of mental health issues.

WIP the "Holiday Blues" Away

By, Kevin Cole, CHT.

So, you're worried about the dreaded "holiday blues" coming your way this year, or perhaps you are already smack dab in the middle of dealing with them as you're reading this. Well, whatever the case may be, the way you feel about the holidays is going to change dramatically by the end of this short chapter...

First things first... Let's take a glance at just some of the major causes of the holiday blues and help you realize just how normal you actually are, and frankly, how abnormal you'd be if you didn't get at least a little "frazzled" during these times...

- Circling for a half an hour to find parking only to have people honk at you when you wait for someone to pull out
- Waiting in lines for hours
- Spending money you don't have
- Maybe being around family members you can't stand and sensing their dislike for what you bought them (of course sometimes buying something they like is not always your intent ;-)
- Warnings of lay-offs are often the biggest close to the holidays
- Thoughts of everyone else being "happy" while you are lonely
- Some have memories of loss of a loved one on or near the holidays
- Sure, I'll add less sunlight in for the harsher seasonal climates (obviously much of California and Florida etc. would be excluded in that though)..
- And to add to it, these days there are people angry about Christmas being about "Jesus" when they have harsh feelings towards Christianity and Christians angry because it's not enough about Jesus. Some get angry when you say "Happy Holidays" and some get angry when you say "Merry Christmas". Of course both of these have to do with negative beliefs brought on by different life experiences, usually negative...
- On top of this you're also angry towards "Thanksgiving" because of the whole "untold truth" about the history etc...
- You've got militant vegetarians angry about all of the "Turkey Homicides"
- You've got Christians angry because of South Park's Santa Claus vs. Jesus boxing episode
- You've got some with feelings of guilt for celebrating and being happy when so many others are suffering... "Do they know its Christmas time at all..." Band-Aid...

You've got all that "stuff" to deal with, so the question in my opinion would be who wouldn't get a little stressed and even a little "blue" during these times!

Let me tell you something and I think you'll be shocked to hear this...

Feeling "blue" is a GREAT thing! Yes, it's freaking awesome! OK, Kevin... Now you've lost me... **how could feeling unhappy possibly be a good, let alone a "GREAT" thing????**

Answer: Because that feeling is there for a reason. It's a messenger. It's meant to tell you something so

that you can learn from it. The thing is, all emotions -good, bad, terrible, wonderful, all serve a purpose! Really, think about it... If you didn't feel bad about something then where would the motivation be to do something different? The only problem is that in our culture, we tend to indulge in negative feelings because if we are truly honest with ourselves, we are getting something out of it.

So how do you change the way you feel?

Answer: Catch yourself in the act! *Pay attention* to what kinds of unconscious habits you have for "doing depression". Notice, do you say negative things to yourself? How is your posture and your breathing? I bet your eyes and posture are down and your breathing is shallow, Right? Do you imagine what could go wrong or remember something that did over and over again causing you to relive it or worse, Cause it to become a self proclaiming prophecy?

Simple Exercises/Techniques you can use anywhere

Well, I've only got a couple of paragraphs but these are some of the most valuable tools for managing your emotional state.

1. **EFT.** Use it. It's great! It's explained further on **pages 8-11** and you can also receive a special "**Get Started Now Package**" at no cost to you from the creator of EFT- Gary Craig- by visiting <http://www.emofree.com/a/?2822/1>
2. **Stand up right now...** YES, I SAID STAND UP RIGHT NOW! Good... Now, what I want you to do may seem a little silly but DO IT ANYWAY...

Now, I want you to stare up at the ceiling and smile from ear to ear... That's right. Stare up at the ceiling and smile ear to ear. Then stretch your arms up as high as you can... Waaaay up there. Are you doing this? If not, DO IT! You went through the trouble of downloading this book and reading this far for so make sure you benefit from it. I promise you that if you do this simple exercise, you will feel better and you will learn how empowered you really are over guiding your own thoughts & emotions as opposed to being at their mercy.

Perfect. Now I want you to do that EXACT same thing (Remember, arms up, heads straight up at the ceiling and smile ear to ear) only this time I want you to think of the most depressing thing you can think of WITHOUT changing your physiology in anyway and *try* to feel "blue". Think of the most depressing thing you can think of while doing this and just *try* to feel depressed. You can't do it can you? Not without changing your physiology in some way...

This very same "smiling" experiment was done at U.C. San Francisco by Dr. Paul Ekmen a number of years ago and was used on "clinically depressed" patients with a 93% success rate of completely lifting their depression and highly impressive results for the other 7%. The reason for this is simple. Our body/mind and spirit (if you are so inclined) are synergistically connected.

Said differently, when you smile there are messages sent to your brain that say "We are happy... Let's send out happy chemicals." Of course these "happy chemicals" are known as Serotonin and guess what? YOU are in control of the pharmacy in your own brain now that you are learning how to use it!

Here's the thing though... I don't want you to stop there. Remember when I told you that ALL emotions, good, bad, terrible, and wonderful all serve a purpose? Once you've been able to change the way you feel about something, or even while you are feeling it... It's very important to ask yourself, "What is the lesson I'm trying to teach myself?" If you believe in God, a Higher Power of some kind, or even that we are all part of the entire Universe then ask...

"What is the lesson **God, Universe, Higher Power,???** is trying to teach me? Whatever works for you is perfect. It's just crucial that you begin to realize *now* that everything happens for a reason and to teach us something, and it's up to us to ask what that lesson is so that we may receive the answer...

So... Simply ask and then write down whatever answer(s) come into your head. Here's the thing... Sometimes people write down things like "The lesson is that I should never trust anyone again because people don't care about anyone but themselves". Guess what? EHEHEH! That's the wrong answer!

How do you know if it's the true lesson?

Answer: If it's aligned with your TRUE SELF. How do you know if it's aligned with your True Self? If it FEELS GOOD, is good for you, good for others, and ideally good for the planet, then there it is! If it doesn't feel good, isn't good for you, others, and ideally the planet then keep asking because you might be close but you still don't have the answer.

What I'd like you to do right now is to go to <http://www.empowermentquest.com/holidayblues-bonus.html> This is a special web page just for you to receive a special audio of me guiding you through this process step by step at absolutely no cost to you. Simply enter your first name and email address and a link will be sent to you with your free audio. I'm looking forward to being your Purposeful Empowerment Guide™ on your quest towards a happier, healthier, more purposeful holiday season. So go there now. It may seem a little silly but do it anyway... I'll see you there!



Kevin Cole, CHt. is the founder of Empowerment Quest International. He is an international Master Practitioner and Trainer of NLP, Hypnotherapy, Life Coaching, EFT, Reiki, and he is but one of a handful who are licensed and approved by the co-creator of NLP, Dr. Richard Bandler. With students and one/one clients across the world, Kevin is known as an authority in assisting people in doing what has been believed "impossible" including overcoming the worst of traumas in as little as one session while also guiding them to discover a life of greater passion, purpose, and joy."

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Holiday Blues

By, Patricia M. Berliner, Ph.D.

The term "holiday blues" is an oxymoron, like "jumbo shrimp." One of the reasons for these "blues" is that, unfortunately, at holiday times, "everyone" seems to think that "everyone else" is having a wonderful time. In fact, holidays are difficult for many people, for many reasons. In our culture, one of the reasons is that, rather than being times to celebrate religious or patriotic occasions, family traditions surrounding these occasions, or simple enjoyment of a day of rest, holidays, especially religious ones (formerly called "holy days"), have been co-opted by the media, corporations, and the "marketplace." Subtly and seductively, we are encouraged to show love, dedication, even religious devotion through "things" that remind us of the occasion....How spiritually enhancing are plastic dreidels or chocolate "Easter" bunnies, or "I love Jesus" t-shirts, or even the beloved Christmas tree?

When holidays were "holy days," people came together...whether in places of worship or each others' homes to commemorate and celebrate together the event in religious history with prayer, perhaps a sharing of what the day means for them, telling stories, and, often, enjoying a meal. Celebrating an event together was a form of celebration one another and the relationships of kinship or friendship that bonded us. Family/cultural traditions and rituals evolved, some strongly related to the religious aspects of the day, some "derivatives" of the sacred...the dreidle at Hanukkah, the Christmas tree, which originally represented the tree of life and the tree of the Cross on which Jesus died, hot cross buns, commemorating Jesus' rising from the dead on Easter. Religious traditions, celebrated by people coming together as a faith community, were times to "be with" others, not challenges to our imagination to find the best gift, spend the most money, rush out at the last minute to make sure everyone they knew got a gift. Perhaps, if we reflect on the meaning of holidays, we will recognize and celebrate the gifts we have been given. If there are people we love and care about, our sharing with them, can make holidays "holy days" again. How wonderful if every day could be a sacred one.

But, for those of us for whom holidays, or holidays, have become burdensome and painful, and for whom it is hard to engender a feeling of joy, there are ways to enjoy the day, or, at the least, to make it more bearable. One surprising thing about people and holidays is that, even though most holidays arrive at about the same time every year, people are surprised that that the day comes so fast and that they never seem to be prepared for it. Often we find ourselves desperately trying to find something to do and someone share it with. We can diminish the impact of holiday blues by thinking ahead and making plans before the blues set in.

You might first want to consider whether you would like to spend the day alone or with other people. Then you might think of a few things you would enjoy doing...or where you would enjoy being. If you think you would like to be with other people, it is important to contact them well ahead of time, first of all, so that they will know that you would like them to share the day with you and, secondly, so that they can put it on the calendar.

So, in the fall, you might begin thinking about Thanksgiving and Christmas/Hanukkah (maybe even Halloween!). In late winter or early spring, you might consider what to do at Easter or Passover (or even St. Patrick's Day) It is important to discuss how you might like to spend the day. If you were brought up in a religious tradition, but no longer practice your religion, but would like to incorporate some kind of "ritual experience" into your day, perhaps a Solstice celebration, a Santa Claus luncheon, an Easter parade, hat contest, bunny hop. You might simply get tickets to a show you want to see but haven't gotten around to yet.

What you choose to do or not to do...at "holiday blues" times is not the most important thing. What is important is that, on these days, you gift yourself in a healthy way. Enjoy celebrating another day of life.

About The Author

Patricia M. Berliner, Ph.D. NYS Licensed psychologist in private practice. Author of *Touching Your Lifethread* and *Revaluing the Feminine: A Process of Psychospiritual Change* (Cloverdale Press) and several book chapters and articles, as well as programs and workshops relating to holistic health, wellness, psychospiritual development, adult development, disaster mental health. Member of the Disaster Mental Health Leadership Team of the Red Cross of Greater NY. Co-founder of Women for a New World, offering psychospiritual programs and workshops throughout the country. Member of the Advisory Board to the Dr. Phil Show. Member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Brentwood, NY

Additional Resources Page

The resources on this page are from Barbara, the creator of this ebook. She wanted to share with you her personal favorites that have helped to empower her during difficult times. Please do your own investigating and find what works for you. This page is just an example of some of the resources available and not intended as recommendations.

National Domestic Violence Hot Line

1 800 799 SAFE 7233

1 800 787 3224 TDD

The **National Domestic Violence Hot Line** is staffed 24 hours a day by trained counselors who can provide crisis assistance and information about shelters, legal advocacy, health care centers, and counseling.

Reading

“The Artist’s Way ~ A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity”

This book was instrumental in my recovering from agoraphobia and panic attacks.

“A New Earth ~ Awakening to Your Life’s Purpose”

This book is very enlightening and will help you to live a more conscious life.

Great for used books!

<http://www.amazon.com>

I use these CD’s and have seen quick results.

<http://www.brainsync.com/>

I find alternative medicine to be great but please research it. It might not be for you!

<http://homeopathyusa.org>

Kevin’s work is powerful!

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