

Holiday Blues Do you struggle with the holidays? Is this a tough time of the year for you?

Not everyone shares the joy associated with the holidays. People feel stress and unhappy feelings associated with the holiday demands. Expectations of gifts, spending money, attending parties and family gatherings are demands that place stress on each of us. Holiday blues affect both men and women, young and old. Holiday blues can lead to unhealthy behavior choices such as excessive eating or drinking, difficulty sleeping and physical complaints. If you experience reactions like these during the holidays, you are not alone.

What Causes the Holiday Blues?

- Fear of disappointing others
- Expecting gifts will improve relationships
- Anniversary reactions from loss of a loved one during this time of the year
- Bad memories, including general holiday chaos and confusion
- Seasonal Affect Disorder (SAD) is more common than you think!

Strategies for Dealing with the Holiday Blues

Here are some ideas to deal with the holiday blues.

- Be realistic. Do not try to "fake it" and do not expect the holiday will solve past problems.
- Drink less alcohol. Alcohol may give you a temporary feeling of wellbeing; however, it is a depressant and never makes anything better.
- Give yourself permission to not feel cheerful. Accept how you feel, tell people how you are feeling and what you need.
- Have a spending limit and stick to your budget. Make presents or give voucher gifts, such as clean someone's house, wash the dishes, give a back rub, make a special meal, etc.
- Look for sources of support. There are many support groups or support services offered at mental health centers and local churches.
- Give yourself special care. Pamper yourself, take a warm bath, enjoy a long walk, sleep in on your day off, etc.
- Set limits and priorities. It is OK to say "no" - you do not have to do it all.
- Volunteer your time. Some people find great stress relief by helping others who are more unfortunate. It is also a

SELF-CARE



good way to put your life situation into perspective.

- Get some exercise. Exercise has a positive impact on depression.
- Practice Gratitude. Be thankful for the good things in your life. Teach your children to be thankful and count your blessings. No "pity parties" in your house!
- Try new traditions. Start a new tradition! Here are some ideas:
 - hide an ornament for your children to find and relocate it every day
 - bake cookies
 - call your friends' children and act as if you were Santa, Mrs. Clause, or an elf.

Learn more about how to have a stress free holiday season at Moritzfinedesigns.com

Cotton Ball Snowman

Supplies:

- Shallow container (like an empty lid)
- Cotton balls
- Craft glue
- Craft paper

Directions:

1. Draw or help your child draw a snowman on the craft paper.
2. Add some glue to the shallow container.
3. Dip the cotton balls into the glue and stick them on the snowman.
4. Glue decorations onto the snowman and surrounding paper to make a wintery scene.

Ask your child, what is your favorite thing about winter?

FUN CRAFT ✂



Find more easy crafts at alittlepinchofperfect.com

Snowman Smoothies

Ingredients:

- 1 banana
- 1/4 cup desiccated coconut
- 8oz milk
- a few drops of vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup Greek yogurt
- maple syrup or honey to taste
- 1 oz oats

To decorate (optional):

- Canned whipped cream
- Clear plastic cups or glasses
- Snowflake sprinkles
- Black & orange marker pens (Sharpies are great!)

Directions:

1. First prepare the banana – peel and slice it into rounds, then lay them out on lined baking tray and freeze for a couple of hours or overnight. (You can skip this step but the milkshake won't be as thick)
2. Before making the smoothie, prepare the cup or glass that you are serving it in by drawing on a fun snowman design with the marker pens.
3. To make the smoothie, add the milk, Greek yogurt, oats, desiccated coconut and vanilla extract to a blender. Remove the banana pieces from the freezer and add them to the blender too.
4. Whizz together until completely smooth, then taste and add a little maple syrup or honey to sweeten if needed.
5. Pour into the prepared cup or glass and, just before serving, top with squirty cream and snowflake sprinkles.

Ask your child, what is your favorite ingredient in this smoothie?

EASY RECIPE 🍴



for caption use: Find more easy recipes at eatsamazing.co.uk

The Choose Love Movement describes Forgiveness

as choosing to let go of anger and resentment toward yourself or someone else, to surrender thoughts of revenge, and to move forward with your personal power intact.

It is no secret the effects of COVID are very apparent, both in personal lives, professionally, and any other aspect of life. A major part of Forgiveness is also learning how to mindfully forgive ourselves. We all make mistakes, maybe even more so now because we are in the middle of a pandemic AND entering the holiday season.

Ask your child, what is something you can forgive today?

CHOOSE LOVE ❤



As an added bonus this month, please enjoy this poem written by a student in Connecticut.

CHOOSE LOVE ❤️

Choose Love Formula

If you want to make a good love entrée
you need the right formula
& the right ingredients

Since it takes the longest start with forgiveness
First Boil the hate out in water for about 30 minutes.
Since it takes a while you might want to lightly
Salt it with patience. After that put it in a strainer
And watch as the hate water floods out
Take your forgiveness and just let it dry.

Next take your courage out of the
Freezer. It's actually a very important ingredient
But most people just let it sit in their freezer never
Even bothering to try it out in different dishes.
Sprinkle some certainty on a flat surface
And roll your courage, both sides in it
Now start kneading out the fear
Once that's done well roll it out
With positive choices, and cut it out in different
Shapes. My favorite is public speaking.
When you're happy with the way
It looks; put it in the oven, and let
It sit for 50 - 60 minutes at
At 365 degrees.

As the courage cooks it's time
To prepare the gratitude. Gratitude is best when
There's lots of different kinds.
Chop it up in little pieces, so it can feed
Many people. To add extra flavor you can
Saute it in mindfulness. And that's it there you
Have your gratitude. This could be used
In almost every meal of the day. It's very
Healthy and I think you'll find it overall improves Diet.



If the courage is ready take it out
And let it cool. Put it all on a plate; don't
Leave anything out. Lastly you want to tie it all
Together with a little bit of compassion.
Well I say little but really you can never have
Too much compassion. Drizzle it over the top of
Your dish and listen to the sizzle of empathy. Let a smile
Grow over your face as you watch
Peoples hearts warm just at the sight of compassion.

This is the choose love formula
Use it to improve your lifestyle
And the lifestyle of everybody around you.

By: Owen Carter
7th Grade
Mooreland Hill School, Kensington, CT

Visit [ChooseLoveMovement.org](https://www.ChooseLoveMovement.org) to learn more about the program and character values.

[You can also click here to sign up for your Daily Dose of Choose Love.](#)