

HOLIDAY DEPRESSION

By Terri Phillips, MFT

The holidays are happy times for most of us. We might get a little stressed with the crowds or the schedules to see our families, but are filled with joy for the most part. Those who suffer from depression may not be able to experience the peaceful joy of the holidays. Some people experience a depressive episode every fall and winter. For these people the holidays can feel like climbing Mt. Everest with bricks attached to their legs.

Symptoms of depression include the following: feeling sad or empty; not feeling pleasure in things you used to enjoy; unexplained weight loss or gain; sleep disruption; loss of energy every day; difficulty concentration; and possibly even feeling like you want to end your life through suicide. If you are feeling suicidal you should call for immediate help from the suicide hotline number in your community. Remember not to use a permanent solution for a temporary problem such as sadness or depression.

If you find yourself sad and depressed during this time of the year, try to practice good self care even though you may not feel like it. For example, utilize your friends and family as support and talk to them about how you are feeling. Also make sure to eat healthy foods, get plenty of rest, exercise and try to do some fun activities. Connect with your children, with nieces nephews or neighbors' children. Children have a way of reminding adults how to have fun.

After your self care efforts, if the depression lingers, you should seek outside help from a mental health professional. Neurofeedback has been a helpful option for those who want to limit the amount of medication they take. It is a non-invasive way for you to train your own brainwaves to operate in a calm, alert, focused way that relieves symptoms of depression. In an office setting, the client is attached by sensors to a computer system generating visual and auditory rewards when your brain produces the desired patterns of waves.

Depression has no boundaries and can also occur in children. In children symptoms may look a little different than in adults. Children may appear to be more irritable and look like they have behavior problems when they are depressed. Often times parents are reluctant to pursue antidepressant medications for children due to their side effects. Neurofeedback is an alternative for children without the side effects of psychotropic medications.

If you read through the above symptoms and found that you or someone in your family may struggle with depression, a therapist or mental health professional can help.

Sometimes when you are depressed, it is difficult to motivate yourself enough to make a phone call for help. It will be worth it for you and your family to make a call for help if you suffer from depression. Reach out for help today!!

Terri Phillips is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist specializing in Neurofeedback located in Temecula. Call 909-730-0410 or visit www.terriphillipsmft.com for more information.