



## December 2008 News Flash

### Holidays Often Bring Mixed Emotions

The jovial holiday season is here when houses are decorated with bright lights, the sounds of Christmas music can be heard everywhere, and family comes together to celebrate. Even during this exciting season, it is not uncommon to feel pangs of depression and anxiety. If you find yourself in this situation, hopefully, this news flash will help you make the best out of the holiday season.

#### **Strategies to Cope With Anxiety and/or Depression:**

Try to identify what's causing you the most stress and focus on how to reduce pressure in that area. Try to identify what brings you the most joy and make time to do it at least once a day. Also try to keep a positive attitude by blocking negative thoughts and practicing positive self-talk.

Studies also show that exercising can help improve symptoms of anxiety and depression. An individual should exercise for at least 30 minutes three to five times a week to make a difference, but even a little bit of exercise could help. Try to find a type of exercise that you really enjoy so it doesn't feel like a chore. You could try walking regularly; it is an easy, cost-free activity.

### **Why Exercise Helps With Depression:**

- Exercise increases energy and endurance
- Exercise reduces stress and improves mood
- Exercise improves how well you sleep
- Exercise helps fight colds
- Exercise adds to brain power

### **Exercise:**

- Practice your SIT AND BE FIT exercises regularly
- Take walks
- Practice proper deep-breathing: one way to relax is to inhale deeply and when you exhale, make a loud sigh
- Learn and practice relaxation techniques
- Imagery is one of the most effective ways to use the mind to generate health (Edlin & Golanty, 1988)

➤ Visit the Health Tips section of our website for easy and fun exercise ideas:  
[www.sitandbenefit.org/health\\_tips](http://www.sitandbenefit.org/health_tips)

## **Top 5 Ways to Overcome Loneliness and Isolation:**

➤ Call an old friend or family member:

Think of someone you've lost touch with over the years and get back in touch with them by restarting a healthy relationship, calling once a week, or meeting for a walk if they live nearby.

➤ Meet your neighbors:

If you don't already know your neighbors, make an effort to meet them, maybe even bring them a batch of cookies.

➤ Volunteer:

Find out where in your community you can volunteer. Not only will you be meeting new people, you will be making a difference in your community.

➤ Find an activity to be involved in:

Most communities have clubs that bring people together who have the same interests or hobbies. Join a fitness class, sewing group, antique car club, or become involved with a church activity group.

➤ Seek out community resources:

Call your local senior or community center to see what kind of activities they offer. They might even offer services at the center that would be helpful to you, like health screening or meals delivered to you home.

May the holiday spirit spread throughout your life! Merry Christmas to all!

Warmest Regards,

Mary Ann

### **Holiday Gift Ideas:**

➤ Holiday Gift Idea #1: Order two or more workouts, receive free shipping!

**OR:**

➤ Holiday Gift Idea #2: Order two workouts, receive one additional free workout!

Additional Sources: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

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