

Turn Holiday Blues To A Brighter Life All-Year Round

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Mental health wellness is something that we all must maintain throughout the year. As we approach the holiday season, I thought that it is important to discuss the incidence of the “Holiday Blues.”

This phenomenon occurs when people who experienced discord and crisis with their families, loss of family members attributed to death or lack of communication and social nexus, and sadness attributed to a traumatic event that occurred during a previous holiday event.

Symptoms of the “Holiday Blues” are associated with feelings of isolation; loneliness; sadness; anxious ideation; feelings of hopelessness; increased consumption of alcohol and elicit-recreational drugs; engagement in compulsive activity such as sex; gambling; or shopping and extreme apprehension when contemplating the holidays.

Here at CIDNY, we recognize that people with disabilities may be prone to have mental health issues like the “Holiday Blues” because people with disabilities have a higher level of social isolation, discrimination attributed to race, gender, sexual orientation, educational obtainment, under employment, ablism and class discrimination.

Some people with disabilities may have caretakers that they relied on for day-to-day care who are not related family members. This level of dependency may cause a person with a disability to feel further dependent and frustrated with their social position in the world.

We recognize that social status in the world is further exacerbated during the holidays. Some people may look at social comparison of those who are fully interactive with their families. These families may share a meal and/or even purchase a present during gift-giving holidays. This activity may cause the person to think “Why not me?”

To combat the “Holiday Blues”, a person may participate in activities that are helpful. One should seek mental healthcare services if they find themselves feeling helpless and hopeless. You can try to volunteer your time to do something for someone who may be in a more challenging position than you. The gift of charity of your time is priceless and can be very rewarding for someone who needs a helping hand.

You can develop social connections with people that consist of time spent both in the real world and in the virtual world. You can also utilize interventions such as mindfulness practices, meditation, deep breathing exercises, music and bibliotherapy to assist you with your depressed and anxious ideation.

Finally, you are not alone. CIDNY is here to assist you. Please contact www.cidny.org and we are happy to help. These simple practices can lead a person to increased self-concept that can shine brightly inward and outward.

Happy Holidays!