Healthy for the Holidays: Preventing Seasonal Affective Disorder

Arielle LaBrecque

December is a time commonly recognized as the “official” holiday season. Between family gatherings and shopping, the last month of the year seems to fly by. However, with holiday commitments and the end of the semester quickly approaching, it is easy to forget that December is also the month with the least amount of daylight.

Sunlight, or the necessary vitamin D, plays a vital role in our everyday lives. It provides natural energy to keep our bodies healthy and active. Lack of sunlight is contributed to a common ailment known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD is a relatively common syndrome and stress does nothing but sustain this seasonal depression.

SAD not only affects mental health, but also physical health. The mix of cold weather and little daylight weakens the immune system. Here are some tips that may help prevent SAD during the holiday season.

- A healthy, protein-filled diet will keep your internal system regulated. Sugar and carbohydrate-rich foods can contribute to and prolong seasonal depression. Studies have shown that the reduction or elimination of caffeine can help prevent SAD.
- Increasing the amount of daily exercise helps you to feel refreshed and renewed, and actually increases your amount of natural energy. Exercise can also help eliminate mental stress and will help you get a better night’s rest.
- Continuing the intake of daily vitamins, or even increasing the variety of vitamins, in your diet will help to fend off lethargy and stress.
- Therapy lights can help in more extended cases of SAD. These therapy lights, or light boxes, are intended to shine on your face and give you the vitamin D that is naturally lacking during the winter months. Some insurance companies may even help to cover the cost of light boxes. For more mild cases, try keeping more lights on in your home.

Learning to recognize symptoms of SAD will help colleagues, friends, and family from being affected from this common disorder. People may not begin to feel the effects of SAD until January or February, but taking the right precautions can stop SAD from affecting your daily life. Those who develop SAD may not know they have a problem, or may even deny depression, which may lead to even more intense depression and other affective health symptoms. Identifying symptoms and learning the steps to prevention will keep you happy and healthy throughout this holiday season.

Source: www.womenshealth.about.com

December 1st is World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day on 1 December brings together people from around the world to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and demonstrate international solidarity in the face of the pandemic. The day is an opportunity for public and private partners to spread awareness about the status of the pandemic and encourage progress in HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care in high prevalence countries and around the world.

Between 2011-2015, World AIDS Days have will have the theme of “Getting to zero: zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS related deaths.” The World AIDS Campaign focus on “Zero AIDS related deaths” signifies a push towards greater access to treatment for all; a call for governments to act now. It is a call to honor promises like the Abuja declaration and for African governments to at least hit targets for domestic spending on health and HIV.

UNAIDS “Getting to Zero” strategy goals by 2015:

- Sexual transmission of HIV reduced by half, including among young people, men who have sex with men and transmission in the context of sex work
- Vertical transmission of HIV eliminated, and AIDS-related maternal mortality reduced by half
- All new HIV infections prevented among people who use drugs
- Universal access to antiretroviral therapy for people living with HIV who are eligible for treatment
- TB deaths among people living with HIV reduced by half
- People living with HIV and households affected by HIV are addressed in all national social protection strategies and have access to essential care and support
- Countries with punitive laws and practices around HIV transmission, sex work, drug use or homosexuality that block effective responses reduced by half
- HIV-related restrictions on entry, stay and residence eliminated in half of the countries that have such restrictions
- HIV-specific needs of women and girls are addressed in at least half of all national HIV responses
- Zero tolerance for gender-based violence

Source: http://aids.ipsf.org/?page_id=180
Did you know that MSU Safe Place provides free education to the community?

MSU Safe Place staff are happy to come speak to student groups, church/community organizations, staff gatherings or any other group you may be involved in.

Presentations can be tailored to your needs, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- Relationship Violence and/or Stalking 101
- Myths and facts
- Statistics/prevalence
- Batterer tactics
- How to be an active bystander
- What is a healthy relationship?
- Why do victims/survivors stay in abusive relationships?
- The use of technology to stalk
- How can you help someone affected by relationship violence or stalking?
- Community resources

Videos and activities may also be utilized to add to the learning experience.

Call (355-1100) or e-mail (noabuse@msu.edu) MSU Safe Place for more details. You can also connect with us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/MSUSafePlace) or Twitter (@MSUSafePlace).

Check out MSU Safe Place on the web at: http://www.safeplace.msu.edu/

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**Winter Break Reading List:** Favorites from The MSU WRC

**Behind the Beautiful Forevers**—From Pulitzer Prize-winner Katherine Boo, a landmark work of narrative nonfiction that tells the dramatic and sometimes heartbreaking story of families striving toward a better life in one of the twenty-first century's great, unequal cities.

In this brilliantly written, fast-paced book, based on three years of uncompromising reporting, a bewildering age of global change and inequality is made human.

With intelligence, humor, and deep insight into what connects human beings to one another in an era of tumultuous change, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* carries the reader headlong into one of the twenty-first century’s hidden worlds, and into the lives of people impossible to forget.

**The Lincoln Letter**—Treasure hunters Peter Fallon and Evangeline Carrington are heading for adventure in Washington D.C., the sleek, modern, power-hungry capital of America...and the crowded, muddy, intrigue-filled nexus of the Civil War. Their prize? A document of incredible historical importance and incalculable value: Abraham Lincoln’s diary.

What if Lincoln recorded his innermost thoughts as he moved toward the realization that he must free the slaves? And what if that diary slipped from his fingers in 1862? A recently discovered letter written by Lincoln suggests that the diary exists and is waiting to be found. Some want the diary for its enormous symbolic value to a nation that reveres Lincoln. Others believe it carries a dark truth about Lincoln’s famous proclamation—a truth that could profoundly impact the fast-approaching elections and change the course of a nation. Peter and Evangeline must race against these determined adversaries to uncover a document that could shake the foundation of Lincoln's legacy.

**Dwarf**—A memoir of grit and transformation for anyone who has been told something was impossible and then went on to do it anyway. Tiffanie DiDonato was born with dwarfism. Her limbs were so short that she was not able to reach her own ears. She was also born with a serious case of optimism. She decided to undergo a series of painful surgeries that gave her an unprecedented 14 inches of height—and the independence she never thought she’d have.

After her surgeries, Tiffanie was able to learn to drive, to live in the dorms during college, and to lead a normal life. She even made time to volunteer, writing to troops stationed abroad, and one of those Marine pen pals ultimately became her husband.

*Dwarf* is a moving and at times funny testament to the power of sheer determination.

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*Source: barnesandnoble.com*
Giving Thanks to Your Community

MSU WRC Staff

Holidays are a good time to give thanks for the many gifts you have in life. Our community has provided many of those things we are all grateful for. The MSU WRC urges all of our readers to thank their community this holiday season by volunteering, giving back, and helping those who may not be as fortunate.

Where Can I Help?

MSU Family Resource Center 432-3745
MSU Student Food Bank 432-5136
MSU Safe Place 432-9570
Advent House 485-4722
Big Brothers, Big Sisters 372-0160
Black Child and Family Institute 487-3775
Boys and Girls Club of Lansing 394-0455
Capital Area Literacy Coalition 485-4949
EVE, Inc. 372-5976
Cristo Rey Community Center 372-4700
Ele’s Place 482-1315
Gateway Community Services 351-4000
Greater Lansing Food Bank 887-4307
Greater Lansing Meals on Wheels 887-1460
Hannah’s House 482-5856
Haven House 337-2831
Junior Achievement of Mid-MI 371-5437
Lansing Area AIDS Network 394-3560
Lansing City Rescue Mission 485-7145
Lansing Teen Challenge 484-6050
Loaves & Fishes Ministry 482-2099
Old Town Commercial Association 485-4283
MI Resource Center on Domestic & Sexual Violence 381-4663
Mother Theresa House 484-5494
Refugee Development Center 482-2252
Ronald McDonald House 485-9825
Salvation Army 482-9715
Sisters Maternity Center 490-5775
Sparrow Volunteer Services 364-3606
Volunteers of America-Lansing Shelter 484-4414
Women’s Center of Greater Lansing 372-9163
YWCA Greater Lansing 485-7201

Happy Holiday’s

Check back often for additional pages of Wisdom, Words & Women

• Breaking News
• Events
• Programs and more . . .

http://wrc.msu.edu

Join us on Facebook:
Search: MSU Women’s Resource Center

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www.twitter.com/MSUWRC

WRC Staff: Jayne Schuiteman, Interim Director, Associate Professor and Personal Safety Coordinator; Patricia M. Lowrie, Consultant; Vacant, Educational Program Coordinator; Audrey C. Smith, Office Manager; Evette Chavez Lockhart, Administrative Assistant; WRC Students: Arielle LaBrecque, Emily Nichols, and Bennetta Thomas, Department Aides.

December 2012
**Calendar of Events**

Saturday, December 1, 2012: WORLD AIDS DAY.

Saturday & Sunday, December 1-2, 2012: MSU Annual Holiday Arts & Crafts Show. Saturday, 9:00AM-5:00PM & Sunday, 10:00AM-4:00PM, MSU Union. 190 artists will gather on the campus of MSU for the 49th Annual Holiday Arts and Crafts Show hosted by the University Activities Board. Admission to the show is FREE! Enjoy the sights and sounds of the holiday season and shop for one-of-a-kind hand-crafted items, made by artists from across the nation! For more information, visit: www.uabevents.com.


Monday, December 24, 2012: University Closed.

Tuesday, December 25, 2012: University Closed.

Monday, December 31, 2012: University Closed.

Tuesday, January 1, 2013: HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**Announcements**

**WACFO has Membership Openings**

We are looking for new WACFO members. Are you the one? Are you a self-starter.... A doer, not a complainer, a leader... or have the desire to be a leader? Do you feel a commitment to MSU and want to help other women succeed? If any or all of these things relate to you, you should apply to be on the Women's Advisory Committee for Finance and Operations (WACFO). We are always looking for women that want to be part of a committee that gets things moving to make this university and your working conditions better. Please visit our website at www.wacfo.msu.edu.

- Are there any hazards or dangers located near the outside of your building? Examples include poor lighting, sidewalks that may be tripping hazards, large potholes in the parking lot.
- Are there any hazards inside your building? Examples include stairwell treads that are sticking up, poor lighting, storage items located in stairwells or hallways.
- Please attach photos if possible of areas previously listed as safety concerns.
- Please provide your name, room number, building, & phone number.

Send this information to Nilda Rodea, Chair of the WACFO Health and Safety/Benefits Subcommittee at rodeon@msu.edu.

**FREE Pre-Finals Childcare!**

The MSU Family Resource Center is again offering free pre-finals childcare to MSU students with children; allowing the much needed time they require to study for finals!

Saturday, December 1, 2012
9:00 AM—4:00 PM
&
Saturday, December 8, 2012
9:00 AM—4:00 PM
($10 deposit required)
Available for children ages 2 weeks—9 years old
LUNCH IS PROVIDED!
(Please bring diapers & baby food if necessary)
SPACE IS LIMITED
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Go to Peoples Church Preschool (200 W. Grand River across from Campus) to complete paperwork and pay deposit. You may call first, 332-2885, to inquire about space availability, however you will not be able to reserve care on the phone.

**For more information, contact:**

MSU Family Resource Center
(517) 432-3745
www.frc.msu.edu

**Transgender Professional Networking Coffee Hours**

Thursday, December 6, 2012
6:00PM—8:00PM
Grand Traverse Pie Company
Orchard Room
1403 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing

The MSU LBGT Resource Center and GLFSA invites trans students, alumni, faculty and staff, and allies to enjoy a professional networking/coffee break. This is a wonderful opportunity to socialize with other members of the trans community, take a break from hectic schedules, and enjoy a delicious cup of coffee!