Solutions

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fseap Now we're talking.

Well-Being in the Winter

As the days grow shorter and temperatures drop, you may notice changes in your mood, sleep patterns (including oversleeping), appetite or cravings, and motivation.

Many Canadians experience some degree of the "winter blues" during the darker months of the year. Small changes to your daily routine can help support your mood and well-being.

- **Maximize daylight exposure:** Get outside for 15 to 30 minutes each day, especially in the morning.
- **Brighten your space:** Keep blinds open and position your workspace, reading chair, or dining area near a window when possible.
- **Incorporate movement:** Schedule daily walks or stretch breaks, head to the gym, or try a new activity.
- **Maintain a sleep routine:** Aim to go to bed and wake up at consistent times, including on weekends.
- **Stay connected:** Schedule coffee dates, join a social group, or plan a regular visit with family or friends.
- **Nourish your body:** Include a variety of nutritious foods, like lean proteins, complex carbohydrates, and vitamin D-rich foods.

Remember, you don't have to manage everything on your own. Pay attention to changes in your mood and reach out for support if symptoms persist or begin to affect your daily life. Confidential resources are available to help you navigate challenges and prioritize your mental well-being.

Give Yourself Grace with Grief

Winter has its own challenges, and holidays or quiet days at home may bring up memories and emotions connected to someone you have lost. Grief can be sparked by an unexpected reminder, stay with you throughout the day, or come and go in waves.

Grief looks different for everyone, and there is no timeline for how it unfolds. Whether it's taking time to rest, sharing memories with a friend, or finding comfort in familiar routines, small things can offer moments of comfort.

For some, talking with someone who understands grief can help. Grief counselling offers a space to talk openly about your loss without pressure to share more than you feel comfortable with.

However grief shows up for you this winter, give yourself the space to experience it in your own way. You can honour the person you have lost, find comfort in the memories you carry, and reach out for support when it feels right.



An Inclusive Approach to Workplace Holidays



Are you a manager or part of a committee that plans workplace events? As the holiday season approaches, keep in mind that not everyone celebrates the same way. A little thoughtfulness can go a long way toward making workplace activities more inclusive and welcoming for everyone.

- **Gift Exchanges:** Skip the gift exchange, make participation optional, or try something different, like encouraging employees to bring in items from home they no longer use.
- **Parties:** Get creative with team-building activities throughout the year. Ask for employee input, make attendance optional, and consider alcohol-free events so everyone can feel comfortable participating.
- **Potlucks:** Consider a catered lunch that accommodates different dietary needs and restrictions. You could also invite employees to share a favourite recipe in the company newsletter to celebrate different food traditions.
- **Accessibility and Flexibility:** Choose physically accessible venues and offer ways for remote or hybrid employees to participate meaningfully.

It's Okay to Opt Out

If you prefer not to participate in a holiday activity, you should feel comfortable declining without having to explain your cultural, religious, or personal reasons. A simple, polite response is enough: "Thank you for inviting me! I cannot make it, but I hope everyone has a great time."

Ultimately, inclusion means creating space for everyone to feel respected, whether they choose to participate or not.

Support to Help You Quit

November is National Addictions Awareness Week—a time to raise awareness about addiction, reduce stigma, and remind people that support is available.

If you're thinking about quitting tobacco or nicotine, you don't have to do it alone. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers confidential counselling and coaching to help you understand your triggers, manage cravings, build healthier coping strategies, and create a quit plan that works for you.

Your EAP can also help connect you with additional tobacco cessation resources and evidence-based supports, including nicotine replacement options and community or healthcare-based programs. Whether you're ready to quit, considering a change, or have tried before and want to try again, support is available.

There's no one-size-fits-all approach to quitting. Your goals, circumstances, and journey are unique—and your EAP is here to meet you where you are.

Take the first step toward a tobacco-free future. Contact your EAP for confidential support and guidance.

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