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MY MENTAL HEALTH

December, 2015

BE MIND FULL

CHAMPIONS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH SINCE 1918



Canadian Mental Health Association
Alberta
Mental health for all

For more information, contact CMHA Alberta Division as follows:

320 Ledgeview Business Centre
 9707 – 110 Street NW
 Edmonton, AB T5K 2L9

Phone: (780) 482-6576
 Fax: (780) 482-6348
 Email: info@cmha.ab.ca

www.mymentalhealth.ca
www.cmha.ab.ca

HERE WHEN YOU NEED US

Our Mission

Mentally healthy people in a healthy society

Please call or email if you wish to be added to the e-newsletter or removed from our mailing list

Charitable Registration Number:

10686-3491-RR0001

DONATE TODAY



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Holidays are a time when we gather around the table with family and friends. Sharing stories, and listening to each other. The holiday season is a time to reconnect with people we care about, and reflect on the past year.

What we know is that mental health is like a level table. When a table is uneven it is no longer functional. The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) helps keep the table level for thousands of Albertans each year. We are here when you need us.

As you reconnect with loved ones this holiday season, take a look around the table. What does mental health mean to you and your family? When you or your loved one has a mental health concern, where can you turn?

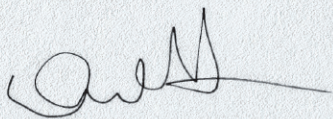
If you're like thousands of Albertans, you turn to the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Why?

CMHA in Alberta is your connection to community mental health support. We know that everyone has mental health and that where mental illness exists, there is help. We are here for you and your loved ones. Our experience tells us that there is hope. Recovery and health are possible.

We rely on your generosity to help us make this a reality. When you give to CMHA you become part of positive change in our province. Your contribution impacts thousands of lives - whether individuals are seeking urgent mental health supports, housing or family support or simply seeking to improve their lives.

Thank you for joining us as part of Alberta's growing compassionate community!



David Grauwiler
Executive Director



8 TIPS FOR HOLIDAY MENTAL WELLNESS

The holiday season is a busy time for most. There is so much to do and plan, which can bring up feelings of being overwhelmed, anxious, stressed, and depressed. This is also a time where people may feel acutely aware of the void left by the loss of a loved one, and their own personal loneliness. We wish you a very happy and healthy holiday season.

1. Budget

There are many expenses during the holidays. Whether you are buying presents, food, or travelling, you may get in the habit of overextending yourself.

- Plan your budget in advance of the holiday season.
- Only spend cash or debit.
- Host a Secret Santa! Buy one gift for your group of friends or family.



2. Family

Not everyone in a family gets along, and sometimes there are personality conflicts. Family members may try guilt trips or push boundaries and you may feel obligated to do things that you don't want to.

- Be realistic about what you can and cannot do.
- Set boundaries with your family and communicate them.
- Stay one night at your family's house, not a whole weekend, or choose one family to visit each holiday instead of trying to see and please everyone. Visiting friends? Stay for a couple hours instead of a whole day!

3. Overindulging

During the winter months, our activity levels slow down and there are many opportunities to consume rich food and alcohol, which can lead to feelings of guilt or shame.

- When you plan your holiday schedule, allow yourself opportunities to get active.
- Be gentle with yourself and understand that your goal is to limit consumption or inactivity, not eliminate it entirely.

4. Taking on too much

You may have over-committed or experience unrealistic expectations during the holiday season.

- Pace yourself. Do not take on more responsibilities than you can handle.
- Cut out the things that aren't truly important.
- Make a list and prioritize the important activities.
- Decide on your limits and stick to them.
- Let others share the responsibilities of holiday tasks.

5. Loneliness and Isolation

Loneliness and Isolation can be a concern for many people during the holidays.

- Pick up a winter hobby or join a group. This will give you planned interactions.
- Volunteer with a local non-profit. It is humbling, and rewarding. You may just make some new friends!



- Keep on the lookout for free holiday activities happening in your community.
- If you know that you have a tough time during this season, tell people to check up on you.

6. Loss

The holidays can be a reminder of the loss of a loved one.

- Acknowledge that this holiday season won't be the same.
- This is an opportunity to create new traditions as a way to keep your loved one's memory alive. Did your loved one care about a certain cause? What were their interests? Incorporate these things into your new holiday traditions.
- Spend time with supportive and caring people who understand what you are experiencing.



7. Seasonal Affective Disorder

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons. The symptoms include tiredness, depression, mood changes, irritability, trouble concentrating, body aches, insomnia, decreased interest in activities, and overeating.

- Treatment for SAD may include light therapy (phototherapy), psychotherapy and medications.
- Speak to a mental health professional in your community about the options available to you.

8. Year-End Reflection

As the year comes to a close, many of us are reflecting on what has changed or stayed the same. It is important to be grateful and gentle with yourself. Take stock of things that are going well, or that you have done well. When we always look at what we don't have, we forget to be grateful for what we do have.

- Give yourself credit.
- Look to the future with optimism.

Don't set New Year's resolutions, as they put unnecessary pressure on you. If you want to make a resolution to change something, start today. There isn't a date that defines your choices.



To learn more:

www.farrelgreenspan.com

Twitter, [@FarrelGreenspan](https://twitter.com/FarrelGreenspan)

4 Ways to Support Mental Health this Holiday Season

1. Give the gift of hope, recovery and health by donating today

Each donation, no matter how big or small, makes a positive difference to the life of someone affected by mental illness, and for that we are extremely grateful.

Donations can be made online [here](#), by phone (780) 482-6576, or by mail.

2. Bring holiday giving to work

What is your organization doing to celebrate and give back during the holidays? Stuck on ideas of how to incorporate giving during the work festivities? Here are some examples:

- **Make a donation on behalf of clients or donate the money you would have used on holiday cards**
CMHA in Alberta will send out a holiday card on your behalf letting your friends, family, colleagues, and clients know a donation was made in their honour. We have printed cards and an electronic card format available.
- **Combine your holiday party with a charity auction**
Throwing a holiday party for your office? Consider combining it with a silent auction, so everyone can get involved.
- **Collections with colleagues**
Do you need a quick and easy way to incorporate giving during the holidays? Use our envelopes or forms to do a quick collection.
- **Host a 50/50 Draw**
A simple way to raise money is to host a 50/50 draw and donate half the proceeds.

3. Volunteer

Volunteers are the heart of the Canadian Mental Health Association. Every day you make a difference. We will have many volunteer opportunities available in 2016. Please email or call us (780) 482-2729 to learn more.

4. Share your voice to spread the love

With the help of our community in Alberta, we can raise the level of awareness for mental health, and provide resources to individuals and communities enabling them to feel empowered and take action.

Can you help us spread the word?

- Share these 8 helpful tips for mental wellness during the holidays with your friends, family and co-workers.
- Share this newsletter with friends, family and co-workers.
- Like us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).



DONATE TODAY

Your donation supports the Alberta Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association in its mission to promote mental health and help those suffering from mental illness in Alberta. We can only do this with the support of our donors and partners- like you! Please donate today.



Ph: 780 482-6576
Fx: 780 482-6348
E: alberta@cmha.ab.ca

Yes! I Want To Donate To The Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta Division!

Donor Name: _____ Donation Amount: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

One-time gift Monthly gift

Payment Method:

Cheque Cash Visa MasterCard American Express

Credit card Number: _____ Expiry: _____

CVV Number (3 or 4-digit # on the back of your card): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Charitable Registration Number: 10686-3491-RR0001
Please return forms to CMHA Alberta 320 Ledgeview Business Centre
9707-110 Street NW Edmonton, AB T5K 2L9