

# From SAD to Glad

Resiliency through Changing Seasons

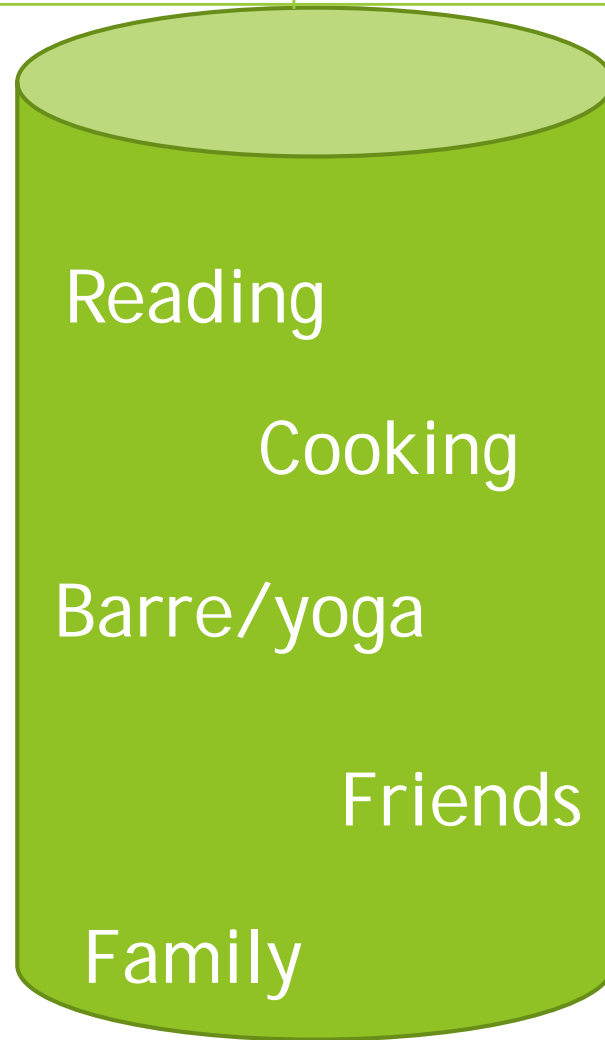
Flint Memorial Library, December 2, 2020

Laura Miranda, LMHC  
Mental Health/Substance Abuse Clinician  
North Reading Police Department  
North Reading Community Impact Team



# What Fills My Cup?

Headspace | Mini Meditation | Let Go of Stress - YouTube



# SAD 101

Clinically, Seasonal Affective Disorder, or “SAD” is<sup>1</sup>

There has to be a relationship between the onset of major depressive episode and time of year

**Major Depressive Disorder  
With  
Seasonal Pattern**

In the last 2 years, two episodes have occurred that demonstrate the relationship to the season, and NO non-seasonal episodes have occurred during that time

Full remissions occur at a characteristic time of year (ex: goes away in the spring)

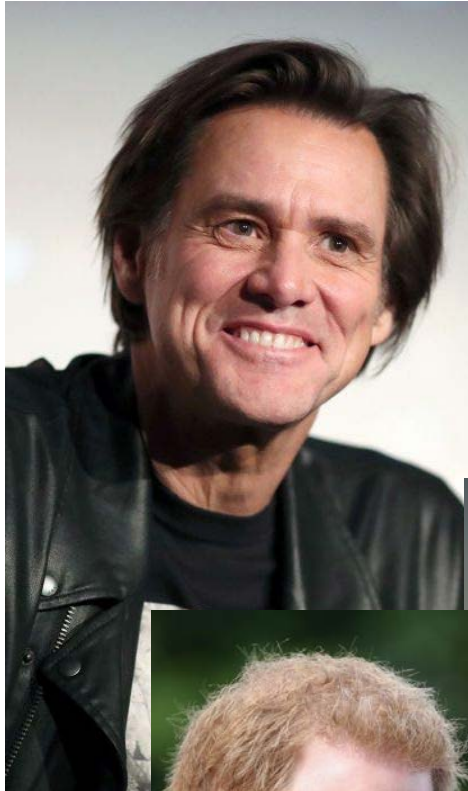
Seasonal major depressive episodes substantially outnumber the non-seasonal episodes that may have occurred over lifetime

# "Winter Blues?"

When daylight duration changes, people may feel a shift in mood. Longer daytime hours in the spring time offer respite to gloomy and dark winter days.

When the feelings of the "winter blues," start to have an impact on daily capabilities and functioning, speaking with a health care provider may be helpful.

# What Does This Look Like?



# How Does This Present?

In most cases, the episodes start in the fall or winter, and remit in the spring

Characterized by:<sup>2</sup>

- ▶ Prominent energy
- ▶ Hypersomnia
- ▶ Overeating
- ▶ Weight gain
- ▶ Craving for carbohydrates
- ▶ Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Difficulty thinking, concentrating, or making decisions
- ▶ Feeling worthless or guilty

SAD may begin at any age, but it typically starts when a person is between ages 18 and 30.

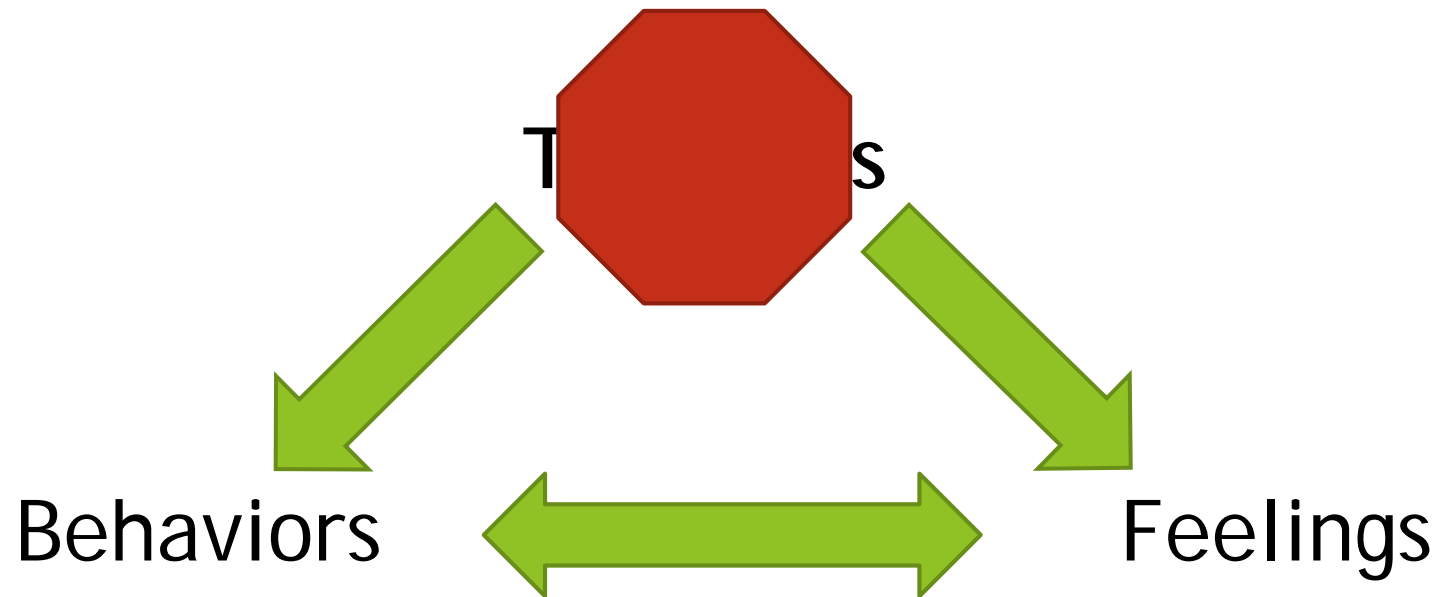
The most difficult months for people with SAD in the United States tend to be January and February.



# Treatments

Light Therapy	Psychotherapy	Medication
<p>The use of a very bright light box (10,000 lux) every day for about 30 to 45 minutes, usually first thing in the morning, from fall to spring.</p> <p>The light boxes, which are about 20 times brighter than ordinary indoor light, filter out the potentially damaging UV light, making this a safe treatment for most.</p>	<p>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), is a type of talk therapy designed to recognize behavior patterns.</p>	<p>Because SAD, like other types of depression, is associated with disturbances in serotonin activity, antidepressant medications called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are also used to treat SAD when symptoms occur.</p> <p>Commonly known SSRIs are Celexa, Lexapro, Zoloft and Prozac.</p>

# Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

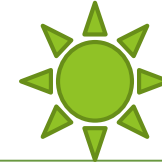


CBT is based on the idea that our thoughts have an impact on our feelings and behaviors



# Photoperiod Manipulation<sup>5</sup>

Number of daylight hours



Believed to have more of an influence on mood and behavior changes than weather-related variables such as

Temperature

Brightness of daylight

Cloud Cover

Precipitation

Light therapy delivered first thing in the morning is believed to “jump-start those circadian rhythms back into the normal phase like they would be in the summertime when the individual with seasonal affective disorder is typically feeling at their best”

Using a light box daily may take several weeks before the individual feels the positive impact. It is always advised to consult with a healthcare provider prior to beginning this, or any, treatment.

# COVID-19 & Mental Health



# COVID-19 & Mental Health

March 2020: **32%** of adults in the United States reported that their mental health has been negatively impacted due to worry and stress over the coronavirus

July 2020: **53%** of adults in the United States reported that their mental health has been negatively impacted due to worry and stress over the coronavirus<sup>7</sup>

“Social distancing” is  
physical separation from  
others



Loneliness can be a risk factor for  
many mental disorders like  
depression, anxiety, adjustment  
disorder, chronic stress, insomnia  
or even late-life dementia

# Within My Control

- ▶ Stay **connected** and maintain your social networks. Try as much as possible to keep your personal daily routines or create new routines if circumstances change.
- ▶ During times of stress, pay attention to your **own needs** and feelings. Engage in healthy activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly, keep regular sleep routines and eat healthy food. Keep things in perspective.
- ▶ A near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed. Seek information updates and practical guidance at **specific times** during the day from health professionals.<sup>9</sup>

# Resiliency

## “Learning coping skills means little in the context of depleted reserves”

Barbara Stanley, PhD  
Professor Department of Psychiatry Columbia University Irving Medical Center  
and Molecular Imaging and Neuropathology and Center for Practice Innovations  
New York State Psychiatric Institute (USA)

A foundation of resilience is beneficial for the day-to-day tasks, as well as in crisis. Of course, it is beneficial to have “tools in the toolbox,” or coping skills, for when things feel overwhelming or out of control.

These coping skills can be extremely useful, if our emotional reserve is well maintained. If not, they may fall short of effectively supporting us through trying times.

Are My Reserves Depleted?	How Can I Build Them Back Up?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lack of pleasure, interest, or zeal for life</li><li>- Poor sleep quality/insomnia</li><li>- Inability to concentrate on normal activities</li><li>- Chronically fatigued</li><li>- "Bad" attitude – negativistic; pessimism</li><li>- Everything feels too difficult; takes too much energy</li><li>- Irritability; quick to anger</li><li>- Hopelessness; sense of dread</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Maintain physical health; sleep, eat, exercise, limit negative influences on health (excessive alcohol, tobacco)</li><li>- Attend to personal relationships; do "maintenance" activities with important relationships; avoid social isolation</li><li>- Engage in "meaningful" healthy activities that have the potential to provide a sense of satisfaction and pleasure (volunteer, religious group attendance, hobbies)</li></ul>

# Building Resilience<sup>11</sup>

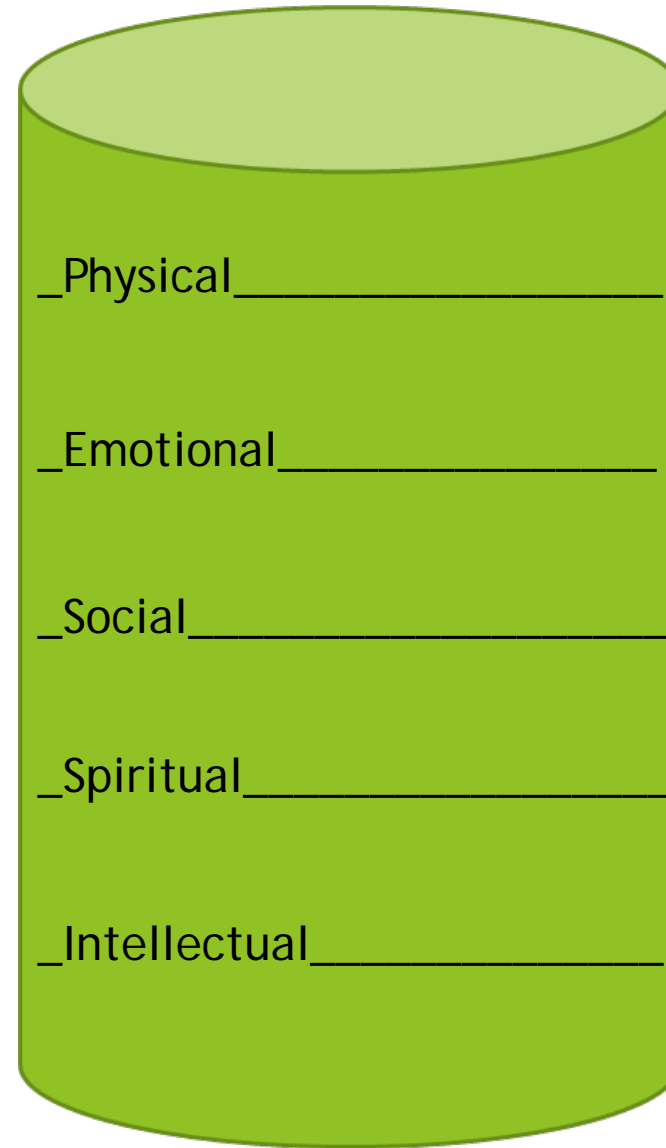
- ▶ Change the Narrative
- ▶ Face the Fear
- ▶ Practice Self-Compassion
- ▶ Meditate
- ▶ Cultivate Forgiveness





Samaritans 24/7, confidential, call or text: 877-870-4673

# Your Turn!



\_Physical\_\_\_\_\_

\_Emotional\_\_\_\_\_

\_Social\_\_\_\_\_

\_Spiritual\_\_\_\_\_

\_Intellectual\_\_\_\_\_

# Contact

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# Citations

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