

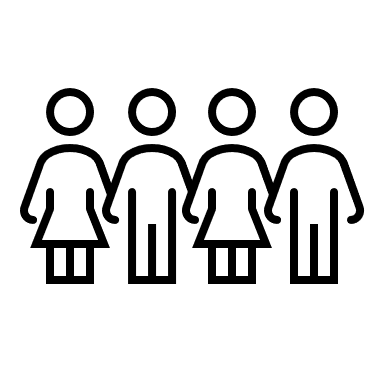
**Embracing the Seasons:**

**Ways to Combat Seasonal Depression**

**Seasonal depression**, also known as seasonal affective disorder (SAD), is a type of depression that occurs at a specific time of the year, usually during the fall and winter months when there is less natural sunlight.

Here are some effective ways to combat feeling low in the winter months.

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**Get Outside:** Even on cloudy days, spending time outdoors can provide you with some natural light exposure and fresh air, which can boost your mood. Take a walk, go for a hike, or engage in other outdoor activities.

**Embracing the Seasons:**

**Light Therapy:** Light therapy involves sitting near a light box that emits bright artificial light that mimics natural sunlight. Exposure to this light for around 30 minutes to an hour each day can help regulate your body's internal clock and improve mood.

**Exercise Regularly:** Regular physical activity is known to improve mood and reduce symptoms of depression. Engage in activities you enjoy, such as walking, jogging, cycling, or yoga.

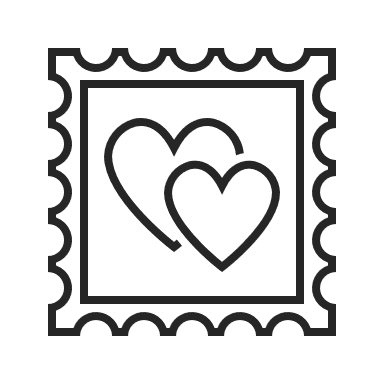
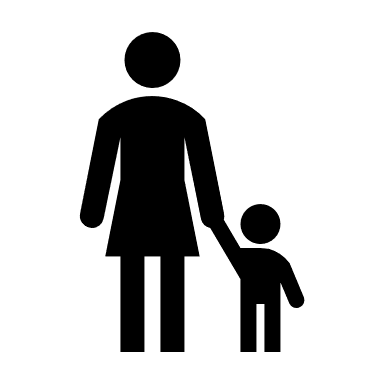
A building with trees and grass

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**Practice Relaxation Techniques:** Techniques such as meditation, deep breathing, and progressive muscle relaxation can help reduce stress and improve your mood.

**Maintain a Balanced Diet:** Avoid excessive consumption of sugary or processed foods, as they can contribute to mood swings. Instead, focus on a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of fruits and vegetables.

**Stay Socially Connected:** Spending time with friends and family can provide emotional support and combat feelings of isolation. Engage in social activities, even if you don't feel like it initially.

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**Practice Self-Care:** Take time for self-care activities that help you relax and unwind. This could include reading, taking a bath, listening to music, or pursuing hobbies you enjoy.

**Set Realistic Goals:** Set achievable goals for yourself, and celebrate your accomplishments, no matter how small they may seem.

**Create a Cosy Environment:** Surround yourself with things that bring you joy and comfort. Decorate your living space with warm colours and soft textures, and use candles or gentle lighting to create a cosy atmosphere.

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**Envision Future Goals:** Refocusing on what spring will bring can reshape your perspective of how to best handle the winter and autumn months. Creating new objectives to look forward towards in the new year could help create optimism around new ventures.

**Seek Professional Help:** If your symptoms persist or worsen, consider seeking help from a mental health professional, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist.

Remember, everyone's experience with seasonal depression is unique, so finding strategies that work best for you is essential. If you're feeling overwhelmed or struggling to cope, don't hesitate to seek professional help.

They can provide personalized guidance and support to help you through this challenging time, and appropriate treatment and support tailored to your needs.

A silhouette of a child walking on a hill

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