Maintaining Your Wellbeing During Winter Weather

Keep to a structured schedule

Sadness, depression, and the blues feed off of inactivity. Although cold weather may make the couch, TV, and internet more tempting, engaging in these activities for long periods of time can lead to decreased energy and low moods. Schedule activities during any down time you may have at home; even if your schedule includes things like “read the newspaper,” “go to the coffee shop,” or “check emails.” Having structure can prevent feeling slow or lethargic.

Practice good sleep hygiene

Similarly, your sleep habits can make or break your mood. Falling asleep and waking up at the same time everyday, even on the weekends, can get your body back on a healthy cycle. Napping, staying up late, and sleeping in can get your mind and body off track, making you feel down and sluggish.

Stay social

Remaining connected with friends and family is a great way to maintain a positive mood. Although social media is an option, the closer you can get to face-to-face contact, the better. Set movie, shopping, or game nights with friends and family. If the weather is bad, call an old friend or family member that you know can make you laugh!

Lighten up

Studies have shown that exposure to light (especially natural light) can help combat the winter blues. Bundle up and go outside when you can. If not, sit by a window at work or home periodically.

Modify hobbies

Wind, rain, snow, and sleet don’t need to stop you! Modify your favorite hobbies and past-times to make them indoor-friendly, and recruit the whole family. Try setting up an indoor bowling alley, cozy library for reading, or turn your living room into a movie theater with popcorn, and tickets that your kiddos can help to create. Try puzzles, games, creating an indoor garden, or try your hand at cooking.

Get moving

Exercise and physical activity releases “feel-good” chemicals in the brain that can quickly boost mood and energy levels. Although you may need to make some changes if you have to remain inside, stay physically active. Walk outdoors when you can, join a gym or even try yoga/ exercise videos at home.

Set goals

Keep a weather eye on the horizon to remind you that warmer weather will be here soon. Develop a list of projects or goals, both short and long-term. Set projects for the Spring and Summer and get planning and preparing now. It will save you time and serve as a tool to know that winter doesn’t last forever. Even if it may feel like it.