



KANE COUNTY
MENTAL HEALTH COUNCIL

making a difference ...together



Message of the Month December 2015

www.kanecountymentalhealth.org

Twitter: @KCMentalHealth

Kane County Mental Health Council

- The Association for Individual Development
630-966-4000
- Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center
630-859-6562
- Delnor Community Hospital
630-208-3000
- Ecker Center for Mental Health Services
847-695-0484
- Family Counseling Service of Aurora
630-844-2662
- Family Service Association of Greater Elgin Area
847-695-3680
- Gateway Foundation/Aurora
630-966-7400
- Greater Elgin Family Care Center 847-608-1344
- INC Board 630-892-5456
- Kane County Health Department 630-208-3801
- League of Women Voters
630-365-2138
- National Alliance on Mental Illness, DeKalb, Kane-South, Kendall Counties, Inc.
630-896-6264
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Kane County North
847-410-9719
- Presence Mercy Medical Center 630-801-2657
- Presence St. Joseph Hospital
847-931-5521
- Senior Services Associates
847-741-0404
- Suicide Prevention Services 630-482-9696
- TriCity Family Services
630-232-1070
- VNA Health Care
630-978-9835

Mental Illness: Coping with the Holidays

The holiday season is supposed to be a time full of joy, parties and gatherings with friends and families. But the holidays can be a difficult time for many persons dealing with:

- Personal grief,
- Loneliness,
- Illnesses of all kinds,
- Economic concerns,
- Separation from family members, and
- Relationship issues like separation or divorce

The commercialization of the holiday season bombards us with unrealistic expectations. And many of us feel overwhelmed when our "to-do" list goes on forever! While some people experience temporary periods of depression like the "holiday blues" or Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), many of us live with mental illness every day. The holidays are especially difficult when our own feelings of sadness, loneliness, depression and anxiety are the opposite of the "Hallmark" images we see all around us.

Know that whatever you are feeling, it is right for you.

It is all right to excuse yourself for some time away. On the other hand, for some people it is hard to feel down when helping someone else. There are many opportunities to volunteer during the holiday season. The satisfaction of giving to others can help you put your own problems in perspective. Live in the now! Try to let go of past regrets and experiences and find joy in the present moment. And remember, laughter is good medicine!

Tips for Family and Friends

Set realistic goals and be flexible. The holidays are about love and caring one another. We would all do better to let go of the image of the "perfect" holiday and focus on accepting ourselves and our loved ones without judging, criticizing or advising.

Celebrate the Moment

Despite our good intentions, remember that the holidays rarely turn out as planned. Focus on making them a special time for you and your family, no matter what the circumstances. Celebrate this season of hope and expectation. Celebrate the many blessings in your life.

*Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder, Coordinator of Mental Health Ministries,
Submitted by Laurie Huske, NAMI Kane County North*

Info Corner:

For more information on Coping with the Holidays, visit
www.MentalHealthMinistries.net