

## Do-It-Yourself S.A.D. (Seasonal Affective/Adjustment Disorder) Management - using Complementary Therapies

Why is it that some of us start to feel 'down' when the end of September comes around? When dark nights start at tea-time and we feel we want to hibernate.

There's a condition, which is now recognised by the medical profession, which is called S.A.D. – Seasonal Affective Disorder or Seasonal Adjustment Disorder – it is also called the 'Winter Blues'. And it occurs when there is a shortage of daylight, and some say it's a shortage of sunshine, whichever it is it has a detrimental effect on our serotonin levels – our 'feeling of well being'. When our serotonin dips, we feel down or depressed, lethargic, can't seem to get enough sleep, don't want to go out, don't want to move about.

In fact, it's recognised now that there are some people who do get depressed in the winter-time, and if this 'depression' occurs on a regular basis and the pattern is recognised as being connected to the autumn/ winter time then they could be classed as S.A.D. people. And, as in most it's not only the sufferer who is affected, for their family, spouse, and friends also have to deal with the consequences too.

So what can we do about being S.A.D? Well, medical intervention can be sought, in fact if this situation has not occurred before, then it might well be a one off case of depression, feeling down. However, if it has occurred regularly - each winter over a number of years, then there is a good possibility, according to research that it is S.A.D. And, if you don't wish to go down medical route, then there is always the Complementary Therapies route.

So, if you are interested in the Complementary Therapies route, let's just see what we can do for ourselves – that won't cost an arm and a leg.

**1. Colour Therapy** suggests that the colour orange is very good to raise energy levels, is a positive and uplifting colour – why not wear something orange a scarf or gloves, gents orange ties, ear-rings (carnelian or red jasper), even orange-coloured bracelets (beaded or otherwise). And if you are not in to wearing colours, how about eating off brightly coloured plates, using orange

coffee/tea mugs, have an orange pencil box on your desk., having an orange plant pot for that favourite pot plant, or an orange cushion on your chair and even having a bowl of oranges within view can help

2. Talking of **crystals and gemstones**, why not have some garnet, jade, lapis lazuli, selenite, orange calcite or even a yellow stone near where you work – there are superb choices about now as hanging crystals, ornaments or even tumbled gems – you could have them on your computer, or simply as an ornament nearby
3. And what about **aromatherapy** –orange essence is good for you? Burn a few drops of orange essence, ylang ylang and frankincense in a water burner when you get home from work – it'll lift your mood
4. Or have an orange gel air freshner in the room or office
5. Pamper yourself and mix some Orange and Neroli essential oils in carrier oil and use it to rub on your hands after you've washed them.
6. You can always add a few drops of Lavender to you bath water too
7. Simply **tap** those anxious feelings away by tapping (1) under your eye (on the boney bit of your eye bone), (2) just under your collar bone (on either side of your breast bone) and (3) under your arm on the side of your body (about a hands-width below your armpit). And all you do is take in one deep breath whilst you're tapping each point. Try this for a couple of minutes and see how different you feel.
8. Alternatively you could use **Creative Visualisation** – just imagine yourself bathed in sunshine, on a wonderful holiday soaking up the glorious daylight and warm, golden sunshine, feel that warmth on your body, smell the beautiful clean air, listen to those birds singing

9. We often binge **eat** on comfort foods in the winter if we're not careful, so if you have sweet food cravings (because of low serotonin) then have some fruit or vegetables to hand (peaches, apricots, oranges, carrots)
10. Do cut down on cigarettes and alcohol too as they can deplete vital vitamin stores
11. And you could always practice **deep breathing** – try **Belly Button Breathing** – just imagine a piece of string is attached to your belly button or navel, and this string is about 10inches (25cms) long. And all you have to do is to imagine holding this piece of string at the free end and gently pull it away from your body, feeling your stomach area coming out with it, and as your stomach extends you're automatically taking a deep breath in. Now isn't 'pulling your string' a lot better than having someone tell you to "take a deep breath"?
12. And there's St John's Wort which is called the '**sunshine herb**' – however if you're on medication, best speak with your GP first
13. Or get out during the day-time for a **20minute walk** – preferably in natural surroundings
14. And if you aren't 100% convinced by Complementary Therapies you can always buy a '**daylight-simulator** **lightbox**

So there's just a few ways that you can help yourself to begin to counteract the effects of S.A.D. And you don't need to use all of them – *just use two suggestions daily until symptoms subside.*

If you want to know more, or speak with me, you can contact me as follows:

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