



## THIS MONTH

# Winter blues again this year?

Don't suffer - change this pattern! Can't understand why the holiday festivities don't make you happy and you want to curl up in a ball and sleep?

If this has happened to you more than just this year, you could be suffering from SAD, Seasonal Affective Disorder. SAD is treatable and differs from depression and other mental health disorders as it usually only lasts when the days get short and dark. The further from the equator we live, the higher likelihood this could be what you are dealing with.

### The signs of SAD are:

- ▶ Feeling depressed most of the day - almost every day
- ▶ Difficulty in trying to concentrate
- ▶ Feeling hopeless, guilty or worthless
- ▶ Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed
- ▶ Change in weight - loss or gain
- ▶ Craving carbs and feeling sluggish
- ▶ Having frequent thoughts of death or suicide

Melatonin, which is responsible for helping us sleep, is a brain neurotransmitter that is produced in our brains when we have less night time hours. It is good to have a truly dark room to sleep well - but this production of melatonin can be excessive on gloomy days with limited sunlight exposure. So, if you are dealing with this winter depression, it could be you are getting too much melatonin.

Serotonin is another brain neurotransmitter that regulates our moods. The lack of sunlight could be reducing your serotonin levels causing depression. Lack of sunlight actually disrupts your internal clock.

## About our Founder



Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management (now

called aging life care) since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company in 1989, which now employs over 200 caring people. Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with care management, home care services (caregiving), advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for 28 years.

## Caring for an aging family member

**2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month.  
6:00pm – 7:30pm**

Addressing the fears of Alzheimer's disease and other issues associated with aging.

No fee and no registration required.

We have had an usual pattern of sunny days this December – but January and February could be different.

If not treated, SAD can cause social withdrawal, school or work problems, substance abuse, anxiety, an eating disorder and of course suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Don't let this disorder go untreated for yourself or family members.

Treatments that are effective include Light Therapy – using a light that is specially made for those who suffer from this disorder; it is used for at least one half hour first thing in the morning. These lights can be found on websites like Amazon.com. Other treatments are antidepressants (which should be started a few weeks before we turn back our clocks in the fall for those who suffer every year with this issue).

Adding supplements to your diet could also help – they would be Omega 3's found in fish oil and Vitamin D. Ask your medical provider what dosage is right for you. Iceland has the lowest rate of SAD because of the fish oil – they consume 247 pounds of fresh cold water fish per person each year!

Psychotherapy with a therapist trained in Behavioral Modification can help you change some lifestyle contributors to SAD. Some of the modalities they might use are diet, exercise, social engagement, meditation and guided imagery.

Plan a joy-filled winter! Reduce stress, increase social engagement, eat well, take a vacation to a sunny location, exercise daily, get treatment if depressed, get outdoors, use light therapy and make a commitment to make one new friend this winter.



We have five therapists on staff at Eldercare Services, and we are open to working with you to break old patterns and have a truly joy-filled winter. We also can connect you with Professional Care Managers all over the country through our sister agency, VillagePlan.com.

## MONTHLY AFFIRMATION

**“I am comfortable and at ease this time of the year. I look forward to positives every day.”**

## Upcoming Events

### Dementia: The Road Map from Diagnosis to Family Care

 Jan 17<sup>th</sup>  5:30pm – 7:00pm

**Presented by:** Linda Fodrini-Johnson

Join Linda Fodrini-Johnson as she discusses what you need to know, what you need to plan, and what you and your family can do when faced with the challenges of dementia.



- ▶ What is dementia? Where is it diagnosed?
- ▶ Understanding the progression
- ▶ What does a family need to do to prepare for the journey?
- ▶ Protecting dignity and reducing stress in all family members

No Fee. Advanced registration required.

Class intended for family caregivers or those dealing with the challenges of aging.

Visit <https://eldercareanswers.com/registration-0/> to register.

### How Should Your Investments be Categorized for Safe Keeping?

 Jan 19<sup>th</sup>  2:00pm – 3:30pm

**Presented by:** Eric Rudney, Financial Advisor, President, Rudney Associates

#### Developing A Road Map to Financial Security

- ▶ When do you include family in financial planning?
- ▶ Learn how to choose an expert on financial planning
- ▶ Learn how to calculate what you will need to have the retirement plan you envisioned

No fee, but advanced registration is required.

Visit <https://eldercareanswers.com/event/investments-categorized/> to register.

## Location of Events:

Eldercare Services, 1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595