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#### MENTAL HEALTH MOMENT

## 8 Tips for Beating Holiday Stress

Nancy Bergeron, R.Psych. | info@nancybergeron.ca



Whether your holidays are celebrated in a secular way or are steeped in traditional religious meaning, they are meant be filled with love, laughter, fun, and family closeness. However, for many of us, this can be a time of extreme stress. What we envision in our minds, see on social media, and depicted in holiday movies, can be truly unattainable. Trying to get everything just perfect to match our expectations evokes visions of the movie classic Christmas vacation. So much is well intended. however, the execution falls short at each turn. Making lists for gifts and groceries, cooking/baking, house quests, planning for celebrations, and family obligations can add up to stress for most people at holiday-time. Help prevent holiday stress with the following tips.

- 1. Plan ahead. You know how it goes with procrastination - Christmas Eve spent scrambling through shopping malls and madly wrapping gifts. Plan your shopping list a month ahead and schedule time to shop early. Prepare any meals or holiday treats a few weeks before the holidays.
- 2. Make time to relax. Take time for activities you enjoy and find relaxing. For example, enjoy reading in front of a fire, or go skating with a friend or the family. Don't compromise a relaxing winter evening for another night in the shopping mall. Stay home with the family having a hot chocolate creation day, holiday movies, and popcorn night or a family and friend potluck.
- 3. Put expectations in check. If you're hoping for perfection (from yourself or your holiday experience), you might be setting yourself up for disappointment. Be realistic in your holiday preparations and the holiday experience itself.
- **4. Look for help.** Do not try to take it all on yourself. Connect with your spouse, family, and friends and share the responsibilities for holiday shopping, preparing, and

cooking. Perhaps a cookie exchange or a potluck style traditional dinner where you are only responsible for the turkey and the guests all bring another part of the feast.

- 5. Set limits. Commit yourself to a budget to alleviate post-holiday financial stress. Stick to a certain number of gifts purchased and/or money to be spent. Say "no" to extra holiday work and be honest with yourself about the amount of energy and time you can devote to holiday events and guests. If your social calendar is over-booked, say "no" to an extra pre-Christmas party.
- 6. Eat and drink but be healthy. Holidays are usually full of all your favorite things - including sweets, treats, and cocktails. Practice moderation while enjoying parties and holiday meals. This is the time of year, we need to get sufficient rest, healthy foods, and hydration to ward off colds and flus.
- **7. Let things go.** If family and relative interactions this time of year tend to turn into blow-ups and unmet expectations, the holidays are not the time to resolve old issues. We've had 11 months to confront these challenges with others in a more controlled, respectful, and healthy way. Write your grievances down to address in the early new year to allow time to work through or resolve some of these ongoing issues.
- 8. Don't forget the fun! Remember the reason for all your holiday planning, a season for celebration and time spent enjoying your family and friends. Take the time to remember what this holiday season means to you and enjoy it! This is where mindfulness comes in, be present and take in all the wonder of the season with all your senses.

Wishing you and yours, good mental health and all the joys of the season.

## **Cold Weather Preparations**

by Alberta Health Services



Alberta winters can be bitterly cold and when the temperature dips below -40 degrees Celsius, that's when "extreme cold warnings" occur. Wind gusts can be strong enough in our province to make it feel even colder.

## It's Important to Remember a Few Things During Extreme Cold Warnings:

#### **Try to Stay Indoors**

Roads and other paved surfaces can be snowy or icy during extreme cold warnings. If you must go out, always let someone know where you are going and follow these instructions:

- Check 511.Alberta.ca, Environment Canada, or download the WeatherCAN or AEA Alert app for current road conditions or emergency alerts.
- Try to cover as much exposed skin as possible. Wear warm, waterproof, and windproof layers, scarves, neck warmers, or protective face liners and waterproof footwear.
- If you are sweating, remove outer layers of clothing or open your coat to avoid getting your clothes wet.

Learn how to prepare a vehicle emergency kit if you must drive.

#### Be Careful!

Some people are more susceptible to the cold, particularly children, older adults, those with circulation issues, those experiencing unstable housing, or those outdoors for long periods of time.

Being cold over a long period of time or being exposed to cold air, water, wind, or rain, can cause a drop in body temperature and, in some serious cases, can cause hypothermia.

#### What Is Hypothermia?

Hypothermia occurs when the body gets cold and loses heat faster than the body can make it. A body temperature below normal can be a sign of hypothermia and can cause shivering, confusion, and loss of muscular control (e.g., difficulty walking). It can progress to a life-threatening condition.

#### If you think someone has hypothermia:

- Call 9-1-1 to get medical attention immediately.
- Lay the person down and avoid rough handling, particularly if the person is unconscious.
- Get the person indoors.
- · Gently remove wet clothing.
- Warm the person gradually and slowly, using available sources of heat.
- Protect the person from further heat loss/eliminate contact with cold surfaces.

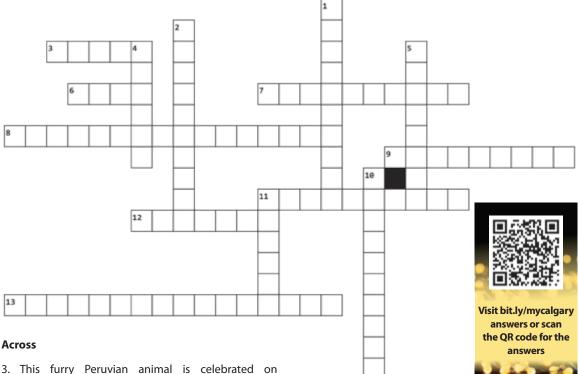
If someone has symptoms of extreme cold, such as hypothermia, please seek immediate medical attention.

#### **Support Is Available**

Other supports are available for those experiencing unstable housing. Call 2-1-1 and press 3 for non-emergency support for shelter or visit www.alberta.ca/homelessness.

If you work outside during an extreme cold warning, consider taking warm-up breaks or rescheduling your work if possible. Your employer may have options available to help you avoid being in the cold for too long.

## **December Crossword**



- 3. This furry Peruvian animal is celebrated on December 9 every year.
- 6. The Canadian Soccer Association formally became a member of this important sporting organization in December of 1912.
- 7. This sweet Canadian export has its own national day on December 17.
- 8. In December of 1982, TIME Magazine named this popular object Man of the Year.
- 9. This famous holiday candy is made to resemble a shepherd's staff.
- 11. This Schitt's Creek star was born on December 17, 1946.
- 12. This romantic New Year's Eve tradition originated from the Roman's Saturnalia festival.
- 13. This book concerning two rival families living in the moors of England, written by Emily Brontë, was published in December 1847.

#### Down

- 1. These prestigious awards celebrating and honouring academics and philanthropists, were first awarded in December of 1901.
- 2. Sint Nikolaas, one of the most popular saints in Europe during the Renaissance, is better known as \_\_\_\_\_\_.
- 4. The highest grossing film of all time was released on December 18, 2009.
- 5. On December 17, 1903, the Wrights' first powered \_\_\_\_\_ was successfully used.
- 10. This Canadian singer won the 1998 Billboard award for 'Hot Soundtrack Albums' for her work on Titanic.
- 11. Canadians drink just under six million litres of this beverage in December.

## **Turning a Home into a Business While Moving at the Same Time**

by Kelsey Higgins

Starting a business can be an exciting time, but it can also prove to be challenging when you don't have enough space for both living and working. If you're in this situation, combining your living and workspace by moving is one solution that can help make the process easier. Here are some tips to consider when starting a business and relocating simultaneously.

#### What to Look for in a New Home

When looking for a new home, make sure it has the necessary space for both living and working. Additionally, decide if you'd like any features such as extra bedrooms or bathrooms, parking spots, or a backyard – all of which could increase the value of the property later on if needed. Having a list of must-haves will help ensure that you do not waste time viewing properties that don't fit your needs.

#### **The Homebuying Process**

Once you find the perfect spot for your business and residence, review all documents associated with the sale carefully before signing anything. Keep in mind that real estate transactions can take weeks or even months to complete so starting early is essential. Additionally, meet with lenders or mortgage brokers as soon as possible to discuss loan options so that you are prepared when it comes time to purchase the property. It is also important to keep in mind taxes associated with buying property as this could impact budgeting decisions down the line.

#### Consider Buying a House "As-Is"

Purchasing an existing property "as-is" may be a viable option for those who are looking to save time and money while still having enough living or working space. Consulting with experts such as realtors is essential so that everyone knows what must be done to complete the sale before closing on the property purchase. Doing research ahead of time can help you make the best decision for your needs.

## Updating Information on Your Website and Social Media

Once you've settled into your new home or workplace, don't forget to update contact information on your website and social media platforms. Having current details such as addresses is essential to let potential customers know where they can find you. Taking the time to update these components of your online presence will ensure that customers have access to accurate information when visiting (or calling) during regular hours of operation.

#### Go Back to School

If starting your own business sounds a little intimidating right now, you could also consider going back to school first – perhaps for a degree in accounting. This will give you an edge over the competition, and you can always take advantage of the flexibility afforded by online learning platforms. That way, you can work toward your degree without having to take too much time away from work, and you'll also have the benefit of being able to implement what you learn into your own business in real time.

#### Make a Detailed Plan and Timeline

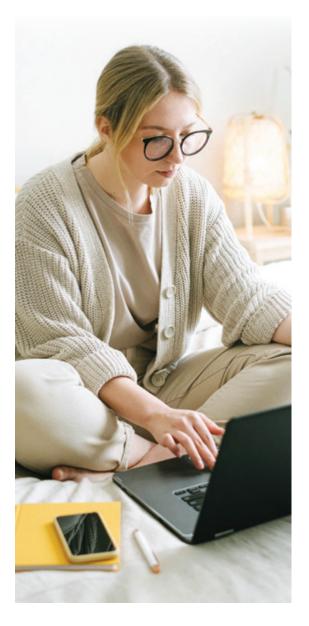
Crafting detailed plans and timelines can help ease the transition period by keeping everyone organized. Doing so will prevent any tasks from slipping through the cracks, particularly when trying to manage multiple tasks such as finding appropriate properties, obtaining financing (if needed), dealing with legal paperwork, and other related matters. Proper planning helps ensure that all these goals are achieved in an efficient and timely fashion.

#### **Create a Budget**

Moving can be a daunting task, especially when it comes to budgeting. To make sure that all the associated costs – from moving and renovation expenses to staffing needs – are taken care of without too many surprises, setting up and managing a budget ahead of time is essential. That way, everything will run more smoothly when you begin operations in your new space.

Starting a business and relocating at the same time may appear overwhelming. However, these tips will help you plan effectively so that neither task is neglected

during the transition period between the current and future location. With proper preparation, tasks involved in relocating and setting up operations in a new environment will be relatively smooth. Without adequate planning in advance, these tasks would be more challenging.





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As the world becomes less secure, with regional conflicts flaring in many parts of the world, we need to remind ourselves of the importance of National Defence. It's an essential service of our government that frequently gets overshadowed by more politically attractive issues. The risks of under-delivering on this service is a hazard, and a risk that will only be clear in retrospect. Yet, the current scenario reveals an alarming picture; our Canadian Armed Forces face a 16,000 personnel shortfall, coupled with a cumbersome procurement system and significant underfunding. This is merely the surface of issues facing the forces.

Protecting our Arctic region is of utmost importance. It is rich in untapped resources and has emerged as a focal point of interest from numerous foreign parties. Events like Russia's invasion of Ukraine have heightened concerns about the vulnerabilities of this strategic region. Presently, the defence infrastructure in the Arctic oscillates between being outdated and entirely non-existent, emphasizing the area's exposure. It is an expensive environment in which to operate, but our presence there is paramount to enforcing our sovereignty.

Another layer of complexity is our substantial reliance on the Unites States for our defence needs. Should Americans gravitate towards more self-interest, our mutual priorities may diverge. While it is not feasible to advocate for a completely independent defence policy, Canada must bolster its armed forces to act autonomously in some matters, including taking the funding of our defence partnerships like NATO and NORAD seriously. Consider peacekeeping where we were once pioneers, but now our contributions pale in comparison. Simply put, our Armed Forces do not have the essential resources to fulfil their fundamental role of defending our own territory - let alone create a significant impact internationally. For the sake of our brave and committed armed forces personnel, and the proud history they uphold on our behalf, this needs to change.

Please contact me at Greg.McLean@parl.gc.ca or by phone at 403-244-1880 and keep up to date on my work in parliament on my website, Greg.McLean.mp.ca.

Sincerely, Greg McLean



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## Mount Royal Real Estate Update

Last 12 Months Mount Royal MLS Real Estate Sale Price Update

	Average Asking Price	Average Sold Price
November 2023	\$1,999,900.00	\$1,950,000.00
October 2023	\$1,535,000.00	\$1,482,500.00
September 2023	\$1,972,500.00	\$1,950,000.00
August 2023	\$962,450.00	\$1,067,500.00
July 2023	\$1,059,616.00	\$1,012,500.00
June 2023	\$1,695,000.00	\$1,650,000.00
May 2023	\$1,507,500.00	\$1,472,500.00
April 2023	\$2,599,999.00	\$2,400,000.00
March 2023	\$1,825,000.00	\$1,750,000.00
February 2023	\$1,015,000.00	\$880,000.00
January 2023	\$2,495,000.00	\$2,750,000.00
December 2022	\$999,000.00	\$985,000.00

Last 12 Months Mount Royal MLS Real Estate Number of Listings Update

	No. New Properties	No. Properties Sold
November 2023	4	3
October 2023	3	6
September 2023	8	8
August 2023	8	2
July 2023	4	8
June 2023	10	7
May 2023	7	8
April 2023	11	7
March 2023	7	3
February 2023	4	2
January 2023	3	1
December 2022	2	1

To view more detailed information that comprise the above MLS averages please visit **umr.mycalgary.com** 





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