

Winter Wellness Planner

Winter can be a time of fun, joy and of challenge. Some people face challenges, including isolation, memories of losses, a limited ability to exercise, overeating, and overspending. If winter creates wellness challenges for you, we encourage you to work through this document; identifying strengths, and habits and routines you can follow each day and week. This wellness planner is designed to help you plan ahead so you can maintain a sense of wellness and remember your strengths in the *eight dimensions of wellness* outlined below.



Strengths

Winter Memories

Many of us have recollections of great winter experiences. These can be worth remembering and writing down.

Describe a positive winter memory.

What do you see as the benefits of the winter season?

The holiday season is an annual festive period. Many cultural and family traditions are a big part of this.

The holiday season can affect your health (social, emotional, physical, etc.).

How do you celebrate the winter/holiday season?

Challenges

Below are some common **challenges** people face during the winter/holiday season (**Common Challenges**). Consider any challenges you often encounter (**Your Challenges**). Finally, this is your chance to write down what you can do (**What I Can Do**) to deal with those challenges.

Wellness Dimension	Common Challenges	Your Challenges	What I Can Do
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercising can be tougher • Holiday activities can interrupt critical sleep cycles 		
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students often deal with the hectic rush to complete projects and assignments before end of term or winter recess 		
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social demands can be overwhelming • Being alone at this time of year can feel especially difficult 		
Spiritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Others may celebrate in ways that conflict with your own beliefs and values 		
Mental/Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short dark days often depress moods • Alcohol is typically served during holiday functions, which can be a trigger for some • Holiday travel can be a major source of contention and stress. Dealing with traffic and the short-temper of other travelers can also be quite challenging • Social anxiety may be heightened at parties or functions with large gatherings • Holidays often bring up powerful emotions of departed friends and loved ones 		
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cold weather may make it difficult to get comfortable • Connecting with nature may be more difficult 		
Occupational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of us feel a bit “at odds” when away from our normal work during holidays 		
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some holidays involve the obligation of spending money on gifts, food, travel, etc. • Heating costs can strain the budget 		

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Strategy 1 – Keep doing what works for you. Stick to your best routines, including diet, exercise, meditation, doing the *New York Times* crossword puzzle, playing with your cat, etc. List some of your routines that you will do during this winter/holiday season:

Wellness Strategy/Routine	Doing it now? or When I will start?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Strategy 2 – Identify the positive people in your life who can provide you with support during the winter/holiday season.

Positive People in My Life	How they Can help
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Strategy 3 – On the next page, you will find some other wellness activities and strategies that others use to deal with winter and the holiday season. Think about what wellness strategies, habits and routines you can plan and track.

Wellness Activities/Strategies

Diet and Nutrition:

- Eat several small meals so that you are not starving when it comes time to eat a holiday feast.
- Drink water before your meal so that you get full faster
- Watch portions. Aim to fill your plate with mostly vegetables and fruit and opt out of having breads and biscuits
- Choose water instead of soda, alcoholic beverages, or caffeinated drinks.
- Be aware that many of us get fewer fresh fruit and vegetables during winter months, so look for healthy ways to replace these vital nutrients

Physical Activity and Environment:

- Walk around a mall with friends
- Join an exercise class or fitness group in the community
- Clean your living area—with gusto!
- Enjoy outdoor winter activities
- Exercise extra care to prevent slips and other winter injuries

Health Care:

- Practice good prevention for colds and flu, such as frequent hand washing
- If you follow self-management for a chronic health condition, don't let holiday events, meals, travel, etc. let you get derailed

Family, Friends, and Supporters:

- Consider which people in your support network are positive supporters and who might be unhealthy for you
- Decide on how much socialization time you need in order to feel well
- Make holiday get-togethers a positive opportunity to renew acquaintances with family and friends you may not see or speak with very often
- Make attempts to “give back” whenever possible

Finances:

- Plan ahead in terms of spending and know your limits
- Consider ways to give gifts other than spending money

Rest/Relaxation:

- Know your limits and plan ahead for proper balance of sleep, relaxation, and activity
- Try to get enough sleep/rest each night, and avoid oversleeping during the winter months

Spiritual:

- Attend gatherings and celebrate the holiday season in ways that are meaningful to you and match personal values and beliefs
- Share/express gratitude each day

Expressive Arts:

- Art can be a great way to express yourself during the holidays
- Consider attending a museum or holiday light show
- Attend a play with a holiday theme
- Think about combining friends/family and expressive arts – do a project or go to a show with some of the people (young and old) in your life

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Strategy 4 – Commit to doing at least one wellness activity every day of the winter period. Write what you plan to do on the calendar below. Remember to review your strengths in the 8 wellness dimensions,

~ December 2014 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	Notes:		

~ January 2015 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

~ February 2015 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Winter Wellness Wordfind

I H M X M N E E R G R E V E
 F P C R A C M S V F X S F I
 U V O W B I S E L D G F Y O
 Y B L C T E C O X S R A T S
 M A V T L E E H R N T U H P
 X B E D N B L S D T B L F E
 N N N S A S E W B B H I A P
 S A P D M Y B O X A N X M P
 C N E N W L R N Y K B I I E
 N U E E O E A S B I S I L R
 D K V I N C T X B N M B Y M
 C D Y R S A I T H G X K S I
 O V E F D E O X B G R R R N
 Y K J U Y P N K T Q W C N T

Baking
 Candles
 Celebration
 Evergreen
 Family
 Friends

Mittens
 Peace
 Peppermint
 Snowman
 Snowshoes
 Stars



January Morn

Bare branches of each tree
on this chilly January morn
look so cold so forlorn.
Gray skies dip ever so low
left from yesterday's dusting of snow.
Yet in the heart of each tree
waiting for each who wait to see
new life as warm sun and breeze will blow,
like magic, unlock springs sap to flow,
buds, new leaves, then blooms will grow.

- Nelda Hartmann