

Seasonal Affective Disorder and Decor

With temperatures cooling as winter draws near, you may find yourself spending more time indoors. Seasonal Affective Disorder, commonly known as the “winter blues” or “cabin fever”, is a disorder that is triggered by seasonal changes and is directly related to lighting and exposure to sunlight. People suffering from winter depression may not always feel depressed but are prone to lack energy and may find it difficult to go about their normal lives. While triggered by seasonal changes, there is no known specific cause of SAD. Though genetics, age and brain chemistry may play a role, this seasonal occurrence points to the effect of light on moods, depression and general happiness.

Light quality affects how we perceive what is around us. If a sunny, warm- weather vacation isn't in the



cards this year, sufferers might consider re-examining their home lighting sources and decór. The idea is to counteract the lack of daylight and the dreary outdoor environment.

Long, dark and cold winter nights can be balanced out by turning up your indoor lighting. Check the amount and quality of your home's artificial lighting. The color of the light is just as important as the quantity. Warmer tones in lighting are much more appealing than cool tones like blues and greens that are given off by florescent lighting. Incandescent bulbs are also favored. They provide a light quality that is much brighter and whiter. Even simply dusting off your bulbs and lamp shades can increase the ambient light levels in your space. Place some candles around. Light these festive, warm decorations and enjoy the atmosphere the lighting from the flames create. During the day, open up your window blinds and draperies and take advantage of the limited hours of natural light.

You may also want to think about a change to your home decór. Color can change or affect one's mood. Adding a little color to your life this winter may help your mood. Grey, black and other dark colors can depress your mood while vibrant colors such as orange, yellow and red give an impression of warmth and light, can “lift your spirits” and contribute to a happier feeling. Now that you may be spending more time indoors, why not take on a winter home- improvement project of applying a fresh, new coat of paint on your walls or even install a vibrant wall mural from Murals Your Way.

During the winter months, cover your bare walls. If you have beautiful and colorful quilt, or a favorite piece of artwork,



consider hanging it for the winter or dress up your walls with seasonal decorations. In the summer, bare or nearly bare walls make rooms feel bright, spacious and airy. However, in the winter this same decor can feel depressed and empty.

Spruce up your furniture. A few throw pillows in warm colors or a vibrant tablecloth will make the room seem brighter. If your furniture is tattered and torn, out of date or the colors are just not what you like, affordable slip covers are a great way to refresh your decór without having to purchase costly new furniture.

Bring in some indoor plants. Not only do plants add life to your decor, but research shows they also improve your health. Plants work hard to clean your air of toxins and reduce stress.

These decór tips will not only help your mood but decorating and cleaning get you up and moving, and can help your body produce endorphins which can give you that feel-good feeling for hours!

Featured Artist



Tim McKenna - Photographer

In just over 20 years he has become recognised as one of the best outdoor photographers in the world. Not only do his action shots make the covers of the leading surf, snowboard, windsurf or motocross magazines, his landscape and fashion shots also appear in numerous ads, posters and billboards around the globe. He has contributed to over ten books distributed worldwide and enhanced more than twenty websites with his pictures.

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