



Coping Strategies for Combating Winter Stress

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WELL *moment*

Better Conversations. Better Health.

AN EDUCATIONAL EVENT BY VHAN

Housekeeping

- Our goal is to have this be an interactive session, so please submit your questions throughout the presentation via the chat box.
- We will send an email of the recording and the presentation slides, along with links to resources discussed.
- We'd love to hear from you! If we don't cover something, or if your question isn't answered, contact us at memberinfo@vhan.com.

- Stephanie Brodtrick, PhD, Senior Director of Learning Systems and Organization Development, VHAN



What are we going to talk about?

Suggest coping skills to get through busy holiday months

Consider ways to manage difficult family relationships

Avoiding burnout by finding time to put yourself first and do things you enjoy

Recognize Seasonal Affective Disorder

Infusing work and personal life harmony into the holidays



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There are many winter holidays between Halloween and Valentine's day.
Which one has the most meaning for you?

A snowman illustration with a red hat, stick arms, and a carrot nose.

Dec. 2 - Hanukkah (begins)
Dec. 6 - Saint Nicholas Day
Dec. 21 - Winter solstice
Dec. 25 - Christmas Day
Dec. 26 - Kwanzaa (begins)
Jan. 1 - New Year's Day
Jan. 6 - Three Kings' Day
Feb. 5 - Chinese New Year



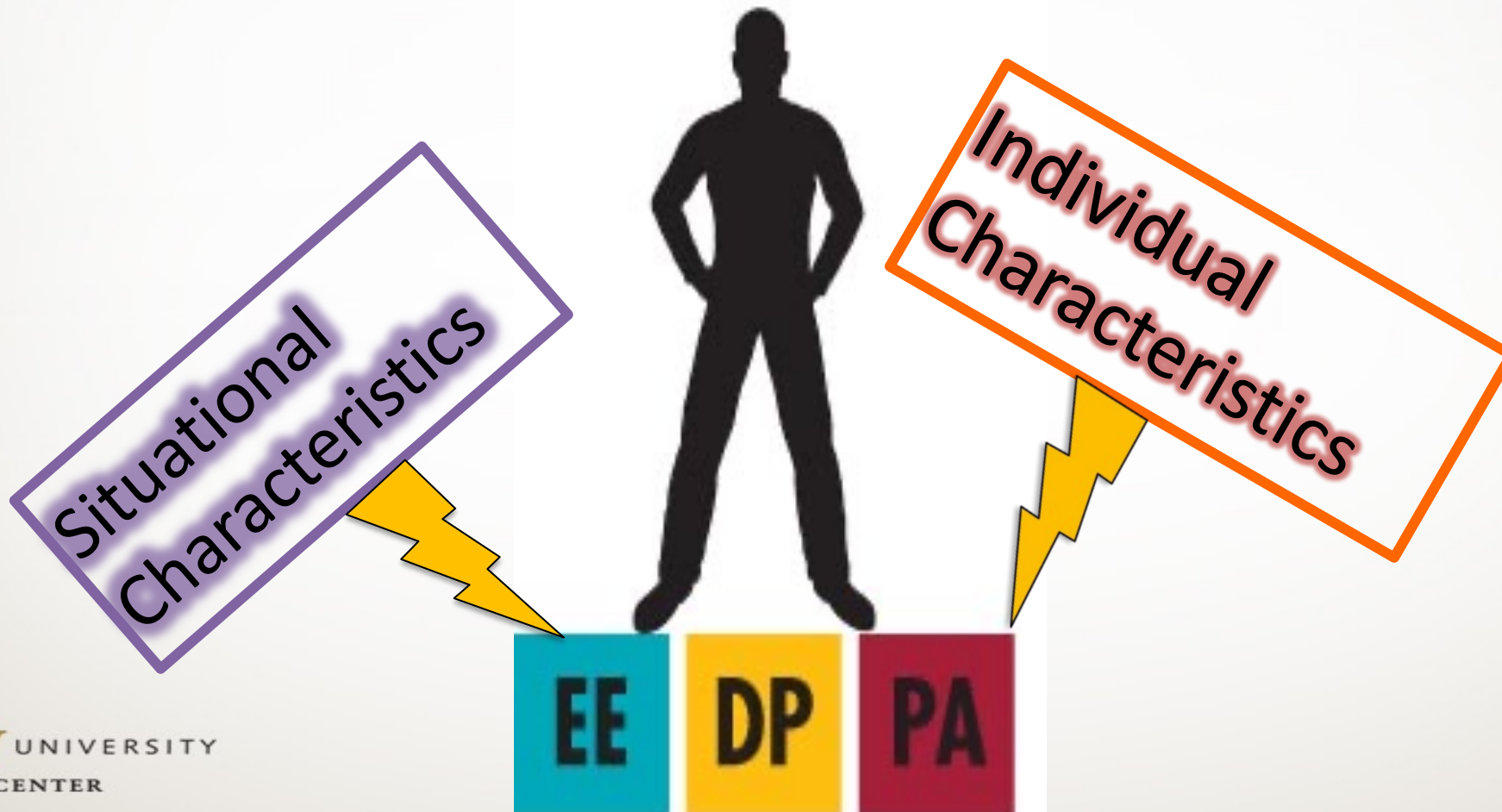
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Research Nurse
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National Study Nurses and Anesthesiologists Burnout and Resiliency



Maslach Burnout Inventory Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS)

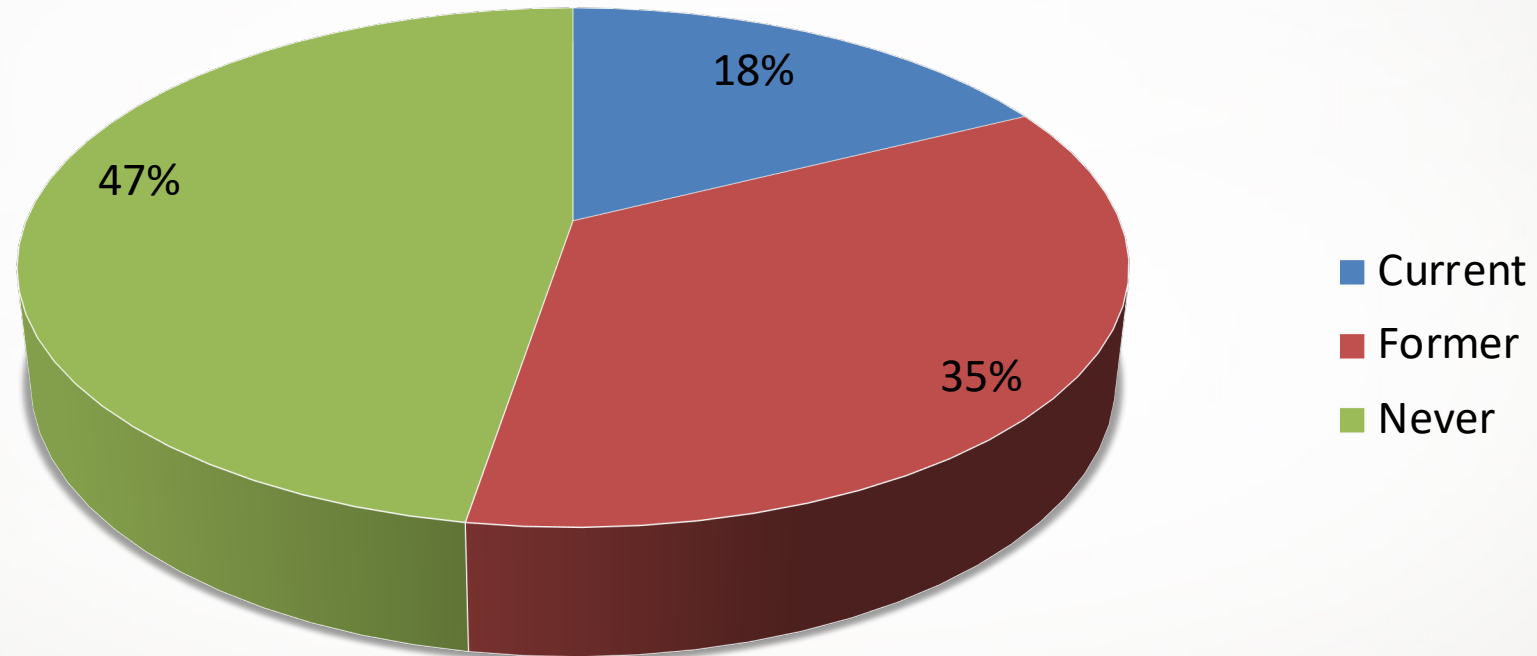


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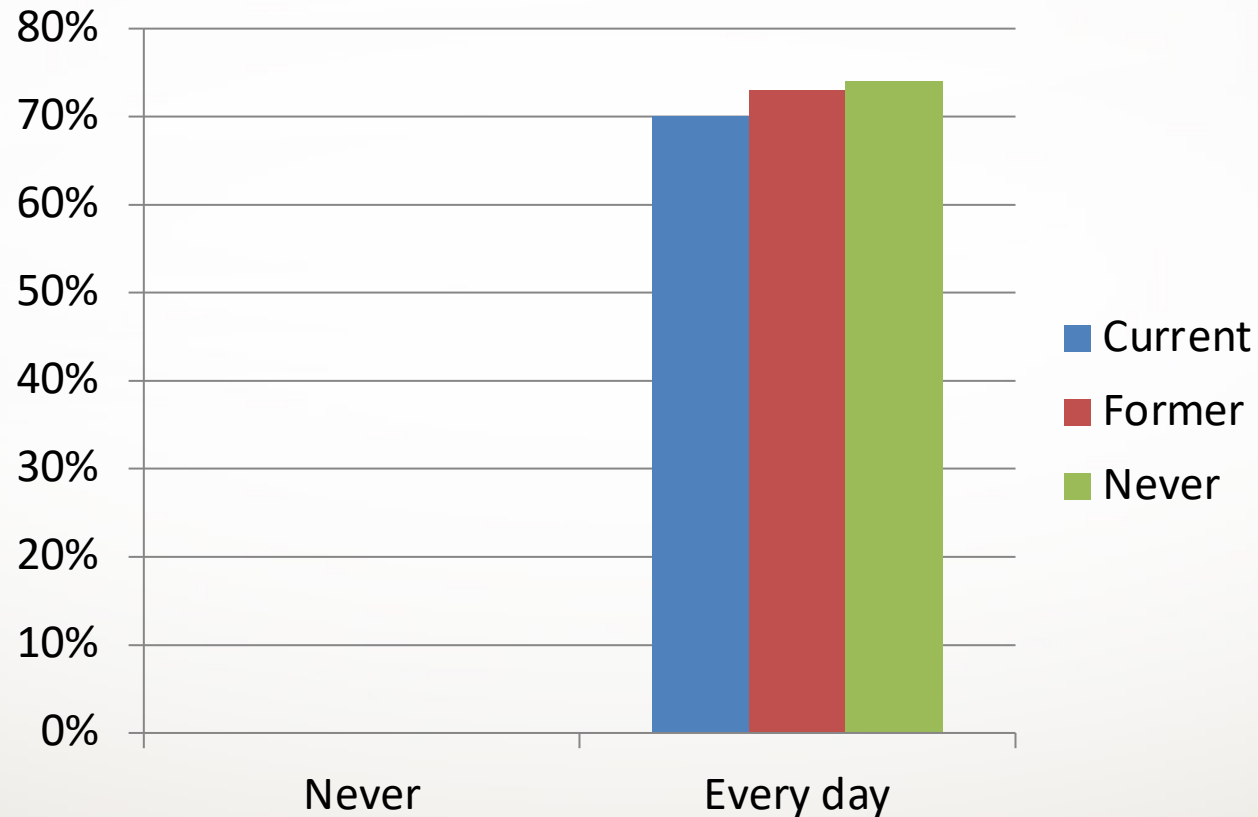


ASPAN member participants

Burnout

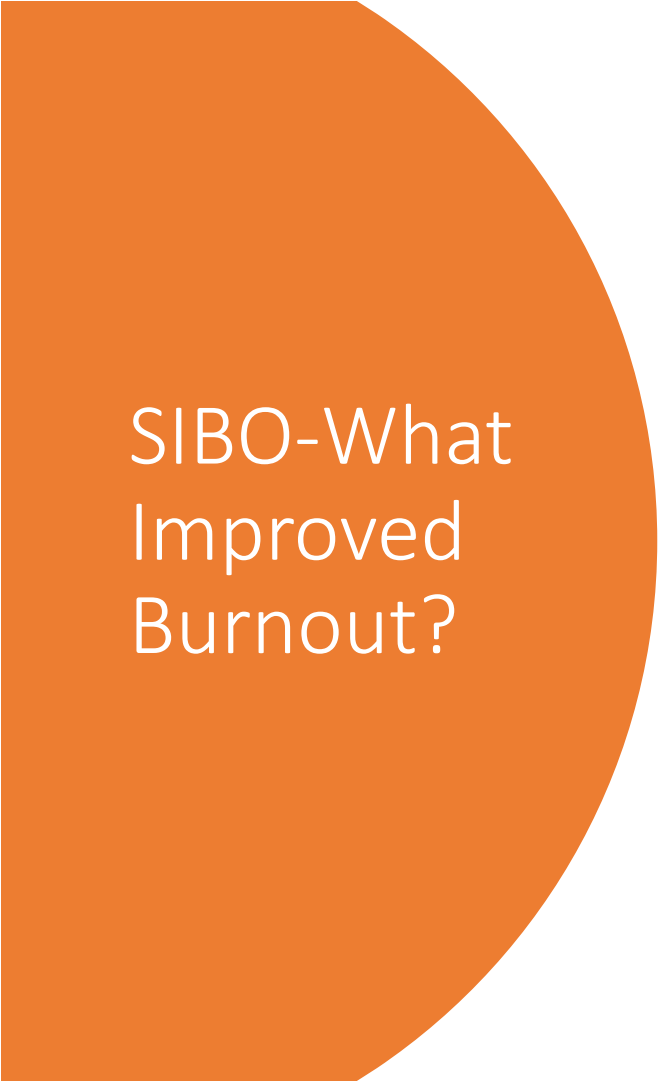


I can easily understand how my patients feel about things.



Take Away Message

- Those experiencing burnout are less likely to engage with coworkers (fatigue and less trustful of colleagues)& feel unappreciated/unsupported by supervisors-so colleagues need to be mindful of this when communicating
- Burnout has physical and mental health implications (fatigue, pain)
- Creative/Mindful activities and Strenuous/moderate physical activities can decrease burnout and fatigue
- Regardless of burnout status nurses maintain empathy for patients

A large orange shape on the left side of the slide, consisting of a vertical rectangle on the left and a semi-circle on the right.

SIBO-What Improved Burnout?

- Up to 40% changing work environment
- Only 27% would recommend changing work environment
- Time off (vacation) or structured “me” time
- Seeking out & participating in educational or social activities
- Talking with others/pets



Finding Resiliency through regression analysis



- Age, tobacco* and alcohol* appear protective (*Surrogate for increased social behavior or more likely to take a break at work to smoke?)
- Regular mindful, creative, or moderate/strenuous activities increased resiliency
- Number of supportive people (≥ 4) increased resiliency
- Perceived support at work, opportunities for advancement and control over work or workload increased resiliency

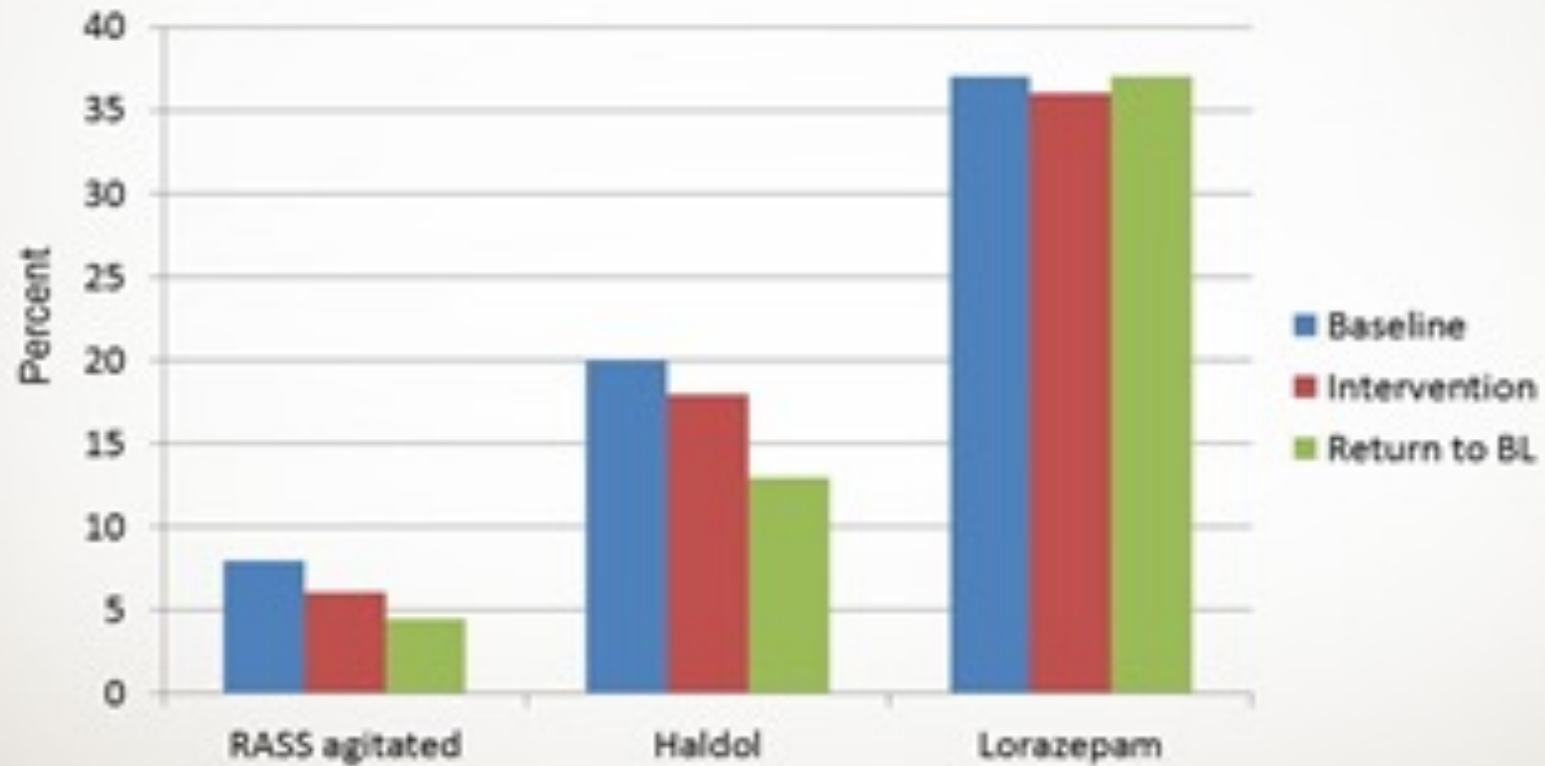




Aromatherapy and Perceived Stress at VUMC

- VUMC HR PSS decreased during and post aromatherapy
- Replicated with same findings in:
- VUMC Neonatal intensive care unit staff
 - Multiple VUMC walk-in clinics
 - Palliative care unit in addition to patient benefits measured

RASS Scores & Medication Use



VUMC Palliative Care Unit

What can we do to reduce burnout?

Individual level

Be mindful of how those burnout perceive their relationship with work now

Institutional level

Offer support, opportunities for professional growth and recognition for our colleagues

Ensure breaks and meals and adequate time off between shifts

hyggelig

[hu-guh-lig] *adj.*

Taking pleasure from the presence of gentle, comforting and soothing things; a feeling of friendship, warmth, peace and contentment in a comfortable and cozy atmosphere.





Holidays are about
Expectations
Traditions
Current Reality

- Jim Kendall,
LCSW, CEAP
Manager of
VUMC Work/Life
Connections-EAP



Stress at Holiday Time

- Searching for Meaning
- Traditions
- Relationships
- Expectations
- So much to do and so little time
- So Little Money



Stressors: The Usual Suspects

- Too Much To Do
- Not enough
 - time
 - energy
 - money
- Expectations of Others
- Expectations of Self



Relationship Challenges

- Unresolved Family of Origin Issues.
- In-Laws
- Children
- Special needs children.
- Memory Challenged Older Adults
- Blended family-divorce issues
- Holidays after a loss
- Holidays alone
- Addictions/domestic violence





Relationship challenges

Difficult family of origin or in-law issues

- Anticipate any issues or stressors
 - Situations are generally predictable.
 - Prepare responses ahead of time
- Identify controls that you have
 - Take caring, assertive stances.
 - Set appropriate limits.
 - Keep expectations realistic.
- Set it up for Success



Coping Tips

- Communicate plans and expectations in advance to all parties.
- Provide structure (games, activities).
- Take breaks.
- Limit time together if there are concerns
- Consider needs of children and seniors if routines are interrupted
- Good *moments* are better than disastrous *days*
- Keep expectations in line with reality.

When Habits Inhibit...
addictions/domestic
violence/"oil and water" volatile
relationships

-
- Keep safety in mind.
 - Use the support of AA, Alanon, YWCA, or domestic violence programs/shelters.
 - Seek professional support
 - Discuss and plan





The holiday season can be especially triggering for those who are grieving, those who are alone, or those who are experiencing depression .

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): More Than the Winter Blues

As the days get shorter and there is less daylight, you may start to feel sad. While many people experience the "winter blues," some people may have a type of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

The first step is to determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.

Do you have mild symptoms that have lasted less than 2 weeks?



- Feeling down but still able to take care of yourself and others
- Having some trouble sleeping
- Having less energy than usual but still able to do your job, schoolwork, or housework

These activities can make you feel better:



- Doing something you enjoy
- Going outside in the sunlight
- Spending time with family and friends
- Eating healthy and avoiding foods with lots of sugar

If these activities do not help or your symptoms are getting worse, talk to a health care provider.

Do you have more severe symptoms that have lasted more than 2 weeks?



- Social withdrawal
- Oversleeping
- Gaining weight
- Craving foods with lots of sugar like cakes, candies, and cookies

Seek professional help:



- Light therapy
- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)
- Medications
- Vitamin D supplements

Nostalgia

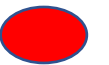
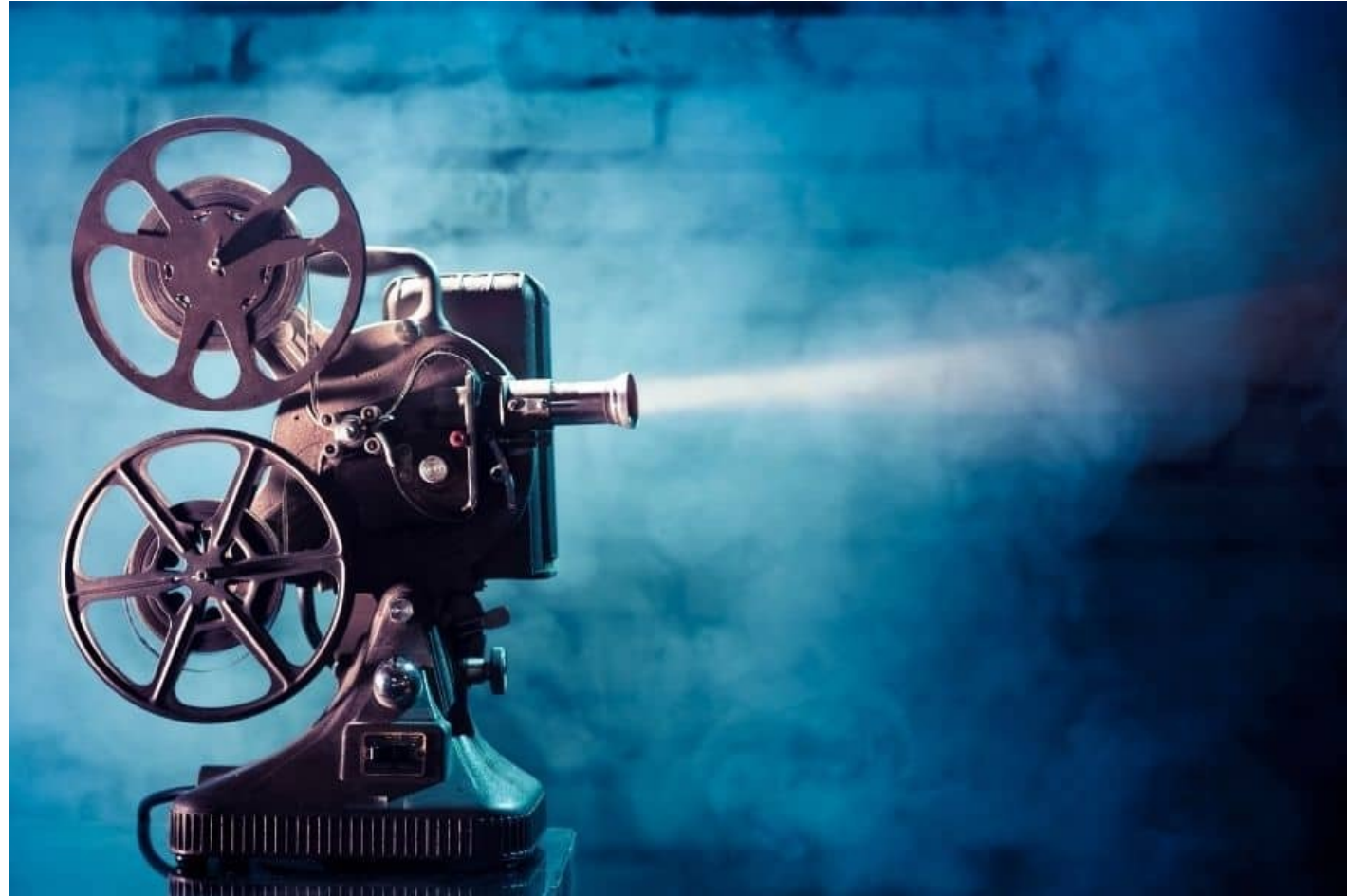
“I want to make this year
just like I remember it as a
child”



Memories aren't
always perfect

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What's your favorite holiday movie



Traditions and Keeping Joy in Your Life



- Engage in activities you enjoy
- Honor Family History and Traditions
 - Carry-Over from Families of Origin
 - The Food
 - The Celebrations
 - The Customs
- Build in time for rest, relaxation and recharging
- Doing “Nothing” is often the “Something” you need

Infuse Work/Life Harmony

- Don't try to do it all
- Let others enjoy the fun....Delegate.
- Use short cuts (its okay to buy prepared food) .
- Set priorities ... do less....enjoy more.
- Build in quiet/relax time.





Celebrating the Holidays may still be evolving

- Acknowledge losses- “You might not be merry and bright”.
- Be: Realistic and safe
- Connect: Reach out and nurture relationships
- Do something for someone else
- Eat: Treat yourself
- Fun: Decorate, bake, or drive around lighted neighborhoods.
- And maintain your well-being activities
 - Self Care
 - Exercise
 - Gratitude

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What word describes a favorite part of the holiday season for you?



Please enter your questions into the chat box.

You can find additional resources at wellmoment.org.

Vanderbilt Health

Affiliated Network