

# The Wash Post. Volume 12: January to February 2020. Winter Is Here.

## Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.).

S.A.D. is a mood disorder that happens around the same time each year. In 2019 47% of UMW students said they felt so depressed it was hard to function.

### Symptoms of S.A.D.:

- Fatigue.
- Depression.
- Social withdrawal.
- Hopelessness.
- Having problems with **sleep**.
- Losing interest in activities.

### Strategies to Cope with S.A.D. (Mayo clinic)

- Increase your natural light exposure by opening your curtains to let in light or going for a walk outdoors.
- Exercise to increase energy and endorphins.
- Practice mindfulness, art therapy, guided meditation, or yoga.
- Connect with a social support network.
- Shift your mindset – instead of thinking how cold it is outside, enjoy that you can wear your comfy warm clothing!
- If symptoms are causing disruptions in life, increased alcohol consumption or suicidal ideation, seek help from the Talley Center (Ext 1053, Lee 106 and Tyler House).

***Did you know?** Each day until the summer solstice, we are gaining 2 minutes of daylight!*

**Battle S.A.D. this winter. Embrace the chance cozy up, with Hygge!**

HYGGE (hyoo-guh) is a quality of coziness and comfort that creates a feeling of contentment or well-being (highly valued in Danish culture).

### How do I Hygge? (self.com)

- Spend time around soft, yellow lighting.
- Consume warm food and drinks (oatmeal, hot cocoa, tea).
- Dress for the weather!
- Get cozy - Use blankets, slippers, fuzzy socks and scarves.
- If you don't have cozy gear, visit the Eagle Resource Closet in Lee Hall!
- Gather with good company as often as you can.
- Slow down and find joy in the little things.
- Indulge in treats mindfully.

## Sleep.

Getting the optimal amount of quality sleep can improve mental health.

In 2019, 26% of UMW students said that trouble sleeping interfered with their academics.

### **Tips for falling asleep (NSF).**

- Aim for a consistent daily schedule and set up a bedtime ritual to wind down .
- Exercise during the day! But not too close to bedtime.
- Avoid drinking caffeine in the later afternoon.
- Avoid napping too close to your bedtime.
- Restrict screen time, or switch your phone to "night mode" to avoid blue light, at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- Use earplugs and eye masks to drown out noises and light.
- Try a breathing or relaxation exercise from YouTube.