



Coping with the Seasons: A Cognitive Behavioral Approach to Seasonal Affective Disorder, Therapist Guide (Treatments That Work)

Kelly J Rohan

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Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) affects a significant number of individuals, with an even greater percentage of population suffering from a milder version of the "winter blues." Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) has long been recognized as an effective treatment for depression and now there is evidence that CBT can also benefit those with SAD. The group program outlined in this therapist guide tailors CBT for depression to the special needs of the SAD population. It can be easily adapted for use in individual therapy, as well as be combined with light therapy.

This therapist guide details twelve sessions to be completed over a six-week period. It gives step-by-step instruction for session activities and discussion. SAD-specific examples, sample dialogues, and diagrams help illustrate the points to be covered. Participants are provided with psychoeducation to further their understanding and awareness of SAD. They learn techniques to reduce symptoms, such as pleasant activity scheduling and cognitive restructuring. By increasing the amount of pleasant activities and changing thoughts and beliefs to be more adaptive, participants reverse the downward spiral of inactivity, negative thoughts and beliefs, and depressed mood. Relapse prevention helps participants maintain their gains and prepare for future winter seasons.

With proven CBT techniques and a strong focus on SAD, this guide is a valuable addition to the clinician's toolbox. A chapter on group logistics and an appendix with fidelity checklists will assist clinicians in successfully implementing the program. Home practice is an important part of the program and the corresponding workbook includes forms for each session.

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