How to Enjoy the Spring Weather With Bipolar Disorder

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Five Great Spring Activities for Bipolar

The flowers are blooming, and the trees are coming back to life. It's spring!

People with bipolar disorder react differently to the effects of the weather. While some have improvements in their overall mood once the weather starts to warm, others sometimes find themselves slipping into hypomanic episodes.

Regardless of whether you love spring or hate it, let's look at some ways to make spring a great one!

Explore the Greater Outdoors

Depending on where you live, winter can force you to stay indoors more often to avoid the bitter cold. This can limit the amount of activities one can do outside, however, once spring arrives you're able to do a lot more outdoors (other than snowboarding and skiing of course).

For many with bipolar disorder living in the moment and enjoying it can be very difficult. However, learning what allows you to live in the moment can be a useful skill and taking the time to enjoy nature may be an option for you.

Whether you live in an urban, rural, or suburban community, there's always a way to enjoy nature in your community. Try going to a park, or beach that you haven't been to. Make it a new adventure. You can recruit friends to join you on your adventure if you wish, but you can still enjoy it on your own.

Take in the scenery, the smells, the warmth of the sun, or just the feeling of the wind caressing your skin. Focus on these feelings. Live in the moment. The more you're able to focus on the feelings of the breeze, the smells of the flowers, or the warm light of the sun, the less focused you'll be on other issues you're experiencing at the time.

Not only can you now start to take walks at the parks, beaches, and rivers/lakes (the water will likely still be cold in the latter two options), you can also take your workout routine there too!

A New Spring Workout Routine

As we discussed earlier, winter can make it difficult to do a lot of different things outside. Now that it's springtime, you're no longer limited to the gym or constricted by countless layers of clothes.

You can now take your workouts (especially power/core and cardio workouts) to a place where you have a scenic view. However, many with bipolar disorder have difficulty with motivating themselves to exercise, but the potential benefits of having an exercise routine make it worth it.

Whether it be taking a jog down the boardwalk, through your local park, or even down your block, you'll be able to catch some rays (make sure to bring sunscreen if the sun is going to be strong that day) while burning calories.

Not only does this exercise positively affect your cardiovascular and muscular health, but it also can have a positive impact on your mood. Many times you can find community organized exercise groups or yoga groups at local community centers or parks. Reaping the benefits from exercise, and enjoying the company of your fellow community members can be very therapeutic.

Get Involved in Your Community

Getting involved in your local community is not only a great way to develop relationships with your neighbors, but also a positive social interaction is great for people with bipolar disorder. It's been found that showing a person with bipolar disorder empathy and understanding can make it easier to cope with their symptoms.

Consider volunteering at a local soup kitchen, food drive, or park cleanup. Both your physical and mental health can benefit from volunteering, and your community will benefit from it too. You can also consider volunteering at local community or youth centers as a mentor or coach! Feel free to attend community events that are available too whether it be town halls, or parades/marches.

If you feel yourself requiring more support, you should also look into whether there are any local support groups for individuals with bipolar disorder. The support and understanding you can receive from individuals who share your struggles can be immensely helpful in combating the negative effects of bipolar disorder.

If you find yourself in a healthy place psychologically, you should still consider attending support groups to provide advice and support to those who are currently struggling with their bipolar disorder. You can even suggest taking some group meetings or events outside on days with good weather!

Take Your Indoor Hobby Outdoors

What if you don't consider yourself a social butterfly, or what if you're not able to exercise/get involved in your community as much as you'd like to? That's not a problem!

There's still plenty of things that you can do that you weren't able to do during winter. You can take many of the activities you enjoy doing indoors, outdoors! This is great because you can still enjoy a subtle, more solitary activity like reading while having your mood benefit from the sunlight.

Bring that favorite new book you've been binge reading to the park, boardwalk, or even your front porch. The sounds of nature can help soothe some of your nerves, and the sunlight can help improve your overall mood. There are plenty of other activities you can take outside like writing, drawing, meditating, or napping (in a place where it's safe to nap of course).

Making the Best of a Difficult Situation

Bipolar disorder can be difficult to deal with during all four seasons, however, finding the best way to cope with bipolar is imperative. Spring provides access to opportunities that were not available to many during the winter months, especially outdoor activities.

Everyone's interests are different, and so are everyone else's needs regarding bipolar disorder. So if these activities that we suggested aren't something that appeals to you, don't be afraid to get creative!

There's plenty that you can do with your others, or on your own to make Spring 2018 a spring to remember.