Vaping Popularity—When I was younger and heard the term, vaping, I would perceive someone had a bad cold, and the steamer or vaporizer was run to get moisture into the room, so the person could breathe and get some sleep. Today, that word is no longer associated with wellness, but rather, it is focused on the epidemic of people turning to e-cigarettes or other electronic means of smoking. Some of this crisis began with manufacturers developing ways to reduce cigarette smoking and as a tool to help people quit smoking altogether, and furthered their marketing to a younger population with the Juul and other devices. An FDA analysis from two leading brands found samples contained carcinogens and other hazardous chemicals, including diethylene glycol, which is found in antifreeze. These chemicals are dangerous for both adults and adolescents. We have been aware for a long time that cigarettes and other tobacco-based products have contributed to long term illnesses and eventual death. Such products are stamped with warnings from the US Surgeon General to keep people aware of this. Although vaping has been around for a very short time compared to smoking tobacco, and posts no warning signs, it has reared up as a definite health problem.

Over the past several months, the news has been inundated with the epidemic of vapor use causing serious lung illness—hitting both young people and veteran smokers. Although the total number of vaping illnesses do not equal the number found in cases of tobacco usage, the time of usage has been overall a lot shorter. The CDC has warned for many years about tobacco usage, and it is currently alerting the public of the necessity of refraining from the use of the various vaping devices. It is important to weigh the risks and benefits and consider FDA-approved nicotine-replacement therapies. They stress the fact that all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, carry a risk. The CDC further states that e-cigarettes and vaping products should never be used by teens, young adults, or pregnant women. Those adults currently smoking tobacco products should not start using vaping materials. They stress that use of the vaping with ANY mixture of THC is extremely dangerous, and this has been highly associated with a current epidemic being seen with the vaping crisis. Products such as THC oils are being used in vaping instruments. Some teens report a significant increase in vaping in the schools, including use of Dab pens with THC oil. If you find yourself in need of more information or are planning to quit, please contact your EAP at Arbor Family Counseling (402)330-0960 or Arborfamilycounseling.com and a counselor will be glad to assist you. To learn more about what the CDC has to say, go to CDC.gov website and read more on the vaping crisis.

An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure!!!
New Hope for Cabin Fever

Traditionally, it is not difficult to slip into a big slump as we put those last reminders of the holidays to rest. Cold weather invades, and few, if any, activities take a high priority on the calendar. As a result, everything seems to become routine, dull and less active. I suggest you spice it up a bit. Some ideas to consider for the period following holidays up until spring include:

Organization—OK. You have gotten adequately organized by putting the holiday items away. Perhaps start the project of organizing things over the next two months. When I organize, I like to take an easy task first. Perhaps, you would like to organize the bathroom cabinets. Check out the quality of the towels you have; should some be replaced? Are your items at a good reach, or should you rearrange for convenience?

Creativity—What a great way to incorporate new positive challenges into your life. Would you like to re-arrange some pictures you have hanging, or even replace some? Consider a different focus. Have you always wished you could do some quilting or another craft? This is a great time to start. Consider going to the internet and taking a brief starter course. This can be a really great resource for you, and it may spark the way to mastering something new!

Look forward—Even though the dreary and cold days have likely been keeping your focus on your regular day-to-day routine, notice for a minute that the days are getting longer. Do you garden? Do you start from seed? Do you do other things to bring the brighter and longer days of spring and summer into focus? Start early. Plan your garden. Get ready for a short get-away. Make plans for a big event that will be coming. Start getting ready now and take the stress off last-minute preparations. It can make your summertime run more smoothly.

Read—Some of you may be more like me and want to curl up with a good book that has been waiting to be read. Others may want to listen to an audiobook or read it on the tablet. Enjoy the power of “me time,” as it can be refreshing and stimulating. It may even encourage you to do more reading on a regular basis.

Volunteer—The need for help in the non-profit community is always alive and well; including your church, social club, or civic organization. If you are hesitant to be out in the weather, stuffing envelopes, making phone calls to the home-bound, or whipping up a batch of cookies for a bake sale can be accomplished at home as many of these organizations are happy to deliver the work and pick up finished projects for you.

Avoid Depression and Anxiety—The ability to redirect yourself during the months of cabin fever can help you to avoid depression and anxiety. Allowing yourself to become involved in activities and quiet time to read or plan for the upcoming days can reduce the tendency to become anxious and depressed. Remember also to employ good methods of self-care; meditate, eat properly, exercise as you are able (especially if you cannot get out in the fresh air), and get adequate sleep. This will keep you in the swing of things, and you will be ready for the wonderful months ahead. —MaryClare Sheridan

Spring Fever is the best way to recover from Cabin Fever. It is a marvelous remedy that will be at your beck and call, if you learn to enjoy yourself while you are in the throes of winter, and welcome the beauty and warmth of the days to come.

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