

# Snapping Out Of Your Funk

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# Feeling Down? You Could Have the January Blues

January is a tough month for many people. For a good two months before the end of the year, most people are upbeat and look forward to the festivities. There are parties, gift giving, celebrations, and more, that fill your time. But then, in a flash, they are over.

There isn't much to January as far as celebrations or holidays go. Everyone is back to work and feeling the let down that the festive season has passed. It is especially difficult in areas that are cold and snowy. Getting hit with a snow storm drags you down even faster.

If you are feeling this, you are experiencing the January Blues. It is normal and happens every year. Some people throw parties to keep their spirits high. That's not a bad idea. If you are feeling a bit down during the January slump, consider throwing a party yourself. You can even call it the January Blues Buster party. The good news is you don't have to invite too many people for this to work.

Some people choose January as their vacation months to avoid the let down of January. That isn't a bad idea, either. If you have the financial means, consider heading to a location that is warm, possibly a beach vacation. For many people, their wallets take a hit during the holidays. If you don't have the cash to go on vacation, take short day trips to areas near you. You'll be surprised what is available in your area. If there is nothing available in your area, consider overnight trips to small towns where hotel stays are inexpensive. January is not a heavily traveled time, so you should be able to catch some great deals.

January is not a great month for people to be alone. For this reason, spend time with family and friends. Make it a point to see people at least once per week, preferably more. If the people you know are not available, use the time to make new friends. You'll find plenty of people experiencing the January Blues who would love to spend time with others.

Spending this time with people makes a big difference in getting through the situation.

Consider starting a hobby during January. Try to find pastimes or interests that involve others. That's a great way to meet people who share similar interests, and it helps take your mind off of the slow month of January.

# Get Out of Your Funk by Reading Inspirational Stories

Why do people write biographies? Some create an autobiography, and that might be a way for them to stroke their egos. Others write about famous people or people of notoriety. Often they are writing these biographies because they admire the person and their life.

Many people write biographies and so there is no shortage of stories about inspirational people. When you are feeling down, why not read about others who have overcome adversity? That can be a great way to pick up your mood.

Many stories will highlight the challenges the person went through and what steps they took to get there. Sometimes, it is hard to believe the people we admire ever acted in the manner described in their stories. However, those stories will make you realize they are just as human as everyone else. They will also help you break the barrier of thinking that you cannot achieve what they did. If that doesn't improve your mood, it's hard to imagine what could.

Use these inspirational stories whenever you are feeling down. It will help you see that your life isn't as bad as thought and that there are solutions. This last point is the most important. In many cases, you can use the stories as a roadmap on how you can solve your problems. They may not be the same, but just reading about them can spark ideas on how to go about solving any issues.

It's easier than ever to find inspirational stories. You could go to your local library or search online. If you already have people you want to learn about, explore on Amazon to find what books or audios are available. Read through the reviews to get a feel for how the stories have inspired others. That's a great way to filter the many stories that exist and find only those that suit you and your circumstances. You want to make the most of your time. You should take some of the reviews with a grain of

salt. However, you will get better at seeing which reviews are real with practice.

Try to read at least one story per week. Usually, the stories are relatively short, and you can read them within a couple of days. Sometimes, it's even a good idea to read stories of people who you don't admire, and you'll come up with some different ideas. You don't have to agree with them, but it's good to diversify your sources.

# Do Something Different Once Per Week

You have probably heard or read on numerous occasions that setting a routine is the best means of accomplishing your goals. That has some truth to it. It's similar to creating habits where repetition is the way to develop them. Sometimes, however, this can cause you to get into a rut or a funk. You still need to maintain your routine but need something to break it as well.

Commit to trying something different. You could do this every day or commit once per week. You could also do it once a month, but you may get more out of it with a higher frequency.

The idea is to have something else interesting looking forward. That will help you when tackling your routines. You can think about that new event or activity while you are getting through your daily grind.

You can choose to do any new activities on your own, with other people or a combination of the two. It's entirely up to you. Sometimes, it's a good idea to include other people and to meet new people as part of that. When you meet new people, they will share ideas that can stir the pot for you. That is good.

What kinds of activities should you strive to do? As examples, you could join a sports team. That's good in the beginning but may also start to become routine after a while. Still, it has the potential of getting you to meet new friends.

If you want to go extreme, why not try skydiving? Admittedly, this is not for everyone. But, it can be something that you have wanted to try but too afraid to do. If it is too much, try something like ziplining first, and take it from there.

The activity doesn't have to be full of adventure to break up your routine. For instance, perhaps you have always wanted to learn how to play a musical instrument and eventually join a band. That's another great activity to add to your list. Another idea is to join a reading group. This activity is a mix of getting together with people and some alone time.

To get more ideas, join local groups that will update you whenever new events happen. The more groups you join, the more options you will have available to you. Be warned, however. You may start having some fun!

# Exercise Can Boost Your Mood

If you are feeling a bit down, give exercise a try. It's believed that exercise releases serotonin, which is a chemical that controls your mood. Increased levels of that chemical make you feel better. Conversely, a lack of serotonin may cause depression. At the very least, it could be responsible for feeling down.

You have likely felt a surge of good feelings after you have finished exercising. Even if you are skeptical of the science, it's hard to deny that exercise benefits your mood. This feeling usually lasts for several hours after the exercise session.

Many people choose to exercise in the morning because the good feelings that come from it will last throughout their workday. Exercise can help you reduce the stress that you may experience from working. It gives you the ability to handle whatever situation confronts you while at work.

If you can't exercise in the morning, you can still benefit from exercise at other times of the day. You are looking for the long-term benefits and effects. Interestingly, some people experience too much of a rush when exercising in the evening. That makes it difficult for them to sleep at night. In this case, it's probably best to choose earlier times to get your exercise.

For most people, exercise helps them sleep better. After the elevated mood, your body and mind will become tired, which sets you up for good rest. That is a natural way for you to get a good night's sleep.

While any exercise is good, you will be better off making regular exercise a part of your routine. It follows that if exercise makes you feel better and you exercise often, you will likely feel better more often than not. Regular exercise also helps to regulate weight. If you ever feel down about your weight, you will help this situation as well.

You don't have to use intense exercise to get the benefits of an elevated mood from exercising. Walking is one of the best exercises available. However, you have to do it frequently for it to be most beneficial. You

should try to walk for several miles during each session, and try to do it three to four times per week. It's not a bad idea to incorporate some resistance training into your workout routine. Make sure not to do this every day to give your muscles a rest. A great benefit to resistance training is that you continue to burn fat even after the session.

# Are You in a Funk? Try Not to Drink Alcohol

You go to an office holiday party, and they are serving up free drinks. You hit the drink along with your colleagues. You are all having a good time. The same happens at family gatherings. A relative prepares some mulled wine, and the smell permeates the entire house. It smells like the holiday. You have to have some.

For many people, there is nothing wrong with indulging in a few holiday spirits. It's a warming feeling, and as long as you drink in moderation, you can enjoy a few drinks on occasion. However, once the holidays are over, people often use alcohol to get through the slow months.

The problem is alcohol is a depressant. If you are using alcohol to try and pick you up during those dark and slow days, it may make the situation worse. It will end up doing the opposite as it will bring your spirits down. Worse, since you are not getting the pick-me-up that you hoped for you'll continue to drink. By the end of the evening, you are drunk as well as depressed.

You may think the answer to this is to use stimulants instead of alcohol. After all, if alcohol is a downer, it should follow that a stimulant is a way to go. However, this may pick you up initially. Then, you crash and have the need to be picked up again. When you continue down this path, you may become addicted to those stimulants, and feel you need them more and more.

Try to find ways that can boost your spirits that don't include drugs or alcohol. If you can do this, you can keep yourself up without risking addiction. If you decide that going out with friends is your way of picking yourself up, it is okay to have a drink. However, this shouldn't be the only way to keep your spirits up. It should go without saying that if you have a problem with drugs or alcohol to stay away from them and get help if you can't.

Hobbies are a good way to keep yourself occupied when you are in a funk. You can do these without using drugs or alcohol. Many hobbies in-

volve other people which increases the fun. Don't let alcohol or drugs be the first means of getting out of your funk. Look for other ways.