



BEAT THE
BLUES
LIKE A **BOSS**

BEAT THE BLUES LIKE A BOSS

HEY THERE!

Transitioning from long, warm, summer days to darker, cooler, fall and winter weather can make you want to crawl under your covers, not to be seen again until the sun shines again next summer. The seasonal change can be hard on bodies originally designed to rise with the sun and retreat at nightfall. Whether you find you have a mild case of winter blues or clinical depression with seasonal onset, the time to start preparing for the cold, dark, and gloomy days, is now. Here are a few tips to help you stay energized and in good spirits.



TIP

MORNING RITUALS

Morning rituals and routines help to get a flow going. Having a morning routine helps to reduce stress levels, set priorities, have effective time - management, and greater productivity. You can also make a to do list to keep you organized and on task. Your routine may look like taking time to meditate, pray, reading or speaking affirmations, and/or setting intentions for your day.

Wake up early enough to have this time & also give yourself extra time to get to work or school early. Feeling rushed or running late can make you feel frantic and flustered. Giving yourself extra time reduces anxiety. This first tip is actually a twofer because the BEST way to optimize on getting an early start is to get a good night's rest; going to bed early enough to get 6-8 hours of sleep, more or less based on individual needs, will set you up for a great start.

TIP 2

BREAK OUT!

Okay, I don't want you to like totally bounce on your job but I literally need you to get up and walk. Move around. Get a glass of water. Stretch. Get your blood flowing.



This is necessary for us all but especially for those of us who sit for long periods of time at work (that can wreak havoc on your back!).

If you would normally take a break to make a personal call, or scroll through your phone, don't do it from your desk. Go somewhere else!

Go outside. Walk down the stairs instead of taking the elevator. If you can't leave your space, watch a short funny video. Research shows watching an 8 minute funny video improves your work performance and will counter the fatigue we often feel from the weather shift.

Break the monotony! Taking breaks are essential as they can improve your work performance and give you an emotional boost. Those of us who struggle with the season change already know how easy it is to feel frumpy and a well placed, intentional, break is one way to counter that.

TIP

3

BE LIKE A SUNFLOWER & FOLLOW THE LIGHT!

The sunlight that is!! We constantly hear about the potential harm of over exposure to sunlight but the right dose of sunlight has health and mood lifting benefits that are often overshadowed.

Both sunlight and darkness trigger the release of hormones and each of these hormones has a different function. Serotonin, the hormone released with exposure to sunlight helps to boost mood and bring calmness.

Melatonin, which is triggered by darkness, is the hormone that helps you sleep. Reduced sunlight causes a reduction in serotonin which contributes to low mood. This is believed to be linked to Major Depressive Disorder with seasonal pattern and here is why;

As the days get shorter and shorter the reduction in sunlight can lead to feeling low and lethargic. The darkness tells our bodies it is time to relax or sleep but this is not necessarily something you want to do at 5pm!

It's easy to fall into a funk or start to feel lazy, especially when your body is prematurely going into sleep mode. **To bring some balance – go get you some sunlight!** Go outside at some point in the day, maybe during lunch, even if just to stand outside for a few minutes.

If you can't get natural light consider a light therapy box which mimics natural sunlight and can be kept at home or your office (do your research

first as it is still an artificial source of light and there are pros and cons).

Light therapy is used as a supplemental treatment to those with seasonal MDD. The best thing to do however, is go out and chase the sun even if you only get to steal a few minutes out of your day.

Even if you don't FEEL like it. Partner up with a coworker for added motivation and accountability. It's up to you to do things that will make you feel better and more vibrant. The sun also has numerous other benefits... so get out there and follow the light!



TIP

4

DRESS UP YOUR MESS!



Some would say the way we dress affects our mood while others argue the reverse, our mood affects our clothes. I think they are both true and it just depends.

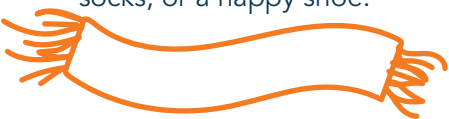
When we are feeling down, rushed, tired, etc., we tend to put less effort into our clothing and maybe even grab the easiest wardrobe option. Other

times we try to psych ourselves out by wearing clothes that mask how we are feeling. Research shows that cheerful colored clothing serves as a mood booster on bad days because we associate bright colors with happiness and sunny days. So reach for the bright colors the next time you're feeling "blah," or "eh..." or "whatever."

Also don't limit yourself to just your outer wear; wearing undergarments that make you feel confident and sexy can impact your mood positively throughout the day. Wear things that are flattering, bright, emphasize the body parts you love and that you feel good in.

You can have specific outfits already set aside for days when you feel down and don't want to put in too much effort. To make this process more effective, you may want to go through your closets and remove anything that you haven't worn throughout the last year (four seasons).

You can also go the Marie Kondo route and only keep things that "spark joy." When you simply can't throw a bright outfit together maybe add some special bright pieces to make an outfit pop – a necklace, scarf, tie, socks, or a happy shoe.



If you're anything like me as soon as the weather changes you find yourself going through your closet, having a full on "I

have nothing to wear!" tantrum. Again, if you're like me, you have plenty to choose from you're just not feeling it or it's all become unorganized.

Take the time to sort through your stuff, keep what makes you feel good (and is weather appropriate) and get rid of the rest.... Because clutter also impacts your mood so – get your Feng Shui on! This will help you beat the blues. I promise!

TIP

5

HUSTLE IN HIBERNATION

The definition of hibernation is to spend winter in a dormant state (animals) or remain inactive or indoors for an extended period.

Due to the cold weather many of us fall into a state of dormancy or inactivity. This could be a great time to rest and certainly you should get the rest you need.

As I shared before, the shorter days and decrease of sun light of the fall and winter seasons can cause us to feel more sluggish and fatigued and that can lead to inactivity, lack of productivity and ultimately, lack of growth. That's never a good thing.

The fall and winter seasons are a great time to shift your hustle.

You don't have to hustle hard but hustle smart! This is the time to study and work on things that you've been putting off. Is there a class you want to take? A test you need to pass or a new credential to acquire?

Do you have an area of interest you'd like to pursue? Perhaps there is something you need to learn to help grow your business or to advance in your career? This is the time to do it. This is the time for self-improvement. Go to school if that's your path.

Create the website, build the email list, create content, learn your craft, plan your event, study for your board exams, or pursue the hobby you've been interested in but never got around to doing. Develop some goals, create an action plan and execute!!

And you have all heard that summer bodies are made in the winter right? This is a great time to get back to, or begin, a workout regimen, so you can have the ultimate summer shine when the seasons shift again. Lastly, remember being busy doesn't equal being productive.

We can do a lot and get nothing done. This coming fall season take a moment to self-assess and make sure you've aligned your actions with your vision... then get your hustle on in a way that leads to the results you want.



TIP

6



GET SOCIAL, BUTTERFLY!

I love to be outdoors.... In the summer. Once the weather begins to shift, there is a brief period where the weather is utter perfection and then I'd be good with not making another appearance until about April. Duty calls, however, and I must continue "adulting" and showing up in the world as a responsible human. It can easily become a monotonous, mundane, cycle of unvarying routine.

If this is you...make an effort to break the monotony. Before long this routine can become an unconscious isolation. Isolation can feel like punishment; remember we don't grow in isolation, we grow in community. Make time to see friends and interact with others – outside of just work! Take yourself out on dates, catch a movie, get pampered by visiting a spa, join a meet up group, a book club...something!

Make sure to get outside to avoid falling into a rut. If you enjoy traveling this is the perfect time to get away. If money is an issue a short weekend trip with some friends to a nearby place is a great way to relax and rejuvenate. If you can't get away, take a weekend to explore your own city. Try a new restaurant, hit up a museum or enjoy the theatre.

Lastly, if being around people is not exactly your favorite thing to do grab a book and do some reading. Choose a book you can read just for your own enjoyment, nothing school or work related; but read it at a library, book store or even a coffee shop. **A change of scenery will do you some good.**



PEACE COMES FROM ACCEPTING

It's normal to feel "down" sometimes. Acknowledge it, rather than trying to mask it. Remind yourself that the season is temporary. Be aware of your feelings and try to identify the source in the moment. Is it simply the weather change or are there other possible reasons for your mood shift? Keep a journal to express your thoughts and feelings, but also, to help you track your mood. You may be surprised to learn there is a pattern or a theme you may have missed otherwise. Many people become depressed at the end of the year, and to the surprise of many, around the holiday season and into the new year. Lastly, be mindful of the length of time you find yourself feeling down and identify if there are other symptoms such as fatigue, loss of concentration, trouble sleeping, over eating or loss of appetite. If you feel down for more than two weeks consecutively you may have clinical depression and it may have a seasonal pattern.

Schedule an appointment with a therapist for an evaluation. It is vital to your growth and development to deal with depression and other internal issues that may be unaddressed. A therapist can also help you process day to day emotions, self esteem, work issues, relationship problems, negative thinking, parenting issues and countless other things. **There really isn't anything you can't work through with a good therapist.**

Accepting rather than masking is the best way to start because you can't deal with something you won't acknowledge. Accepting doesn't mean you lose hope or give up, it means you accept that there is an issue which allows you to get help and make changes. Peace comes when we stop pretending and stop fighting ourselves.

There was no tip on "self care" because every tip was self care! Self care is more than a day at the spa. Self care has been spelled out for you throughout these 7 tips... and the power to Beat the Blues like a Boss... is in your hands.



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