

Beat the Blahs

Shake off the winter doldrums and get your life back in high gear.



“You must get good at one of two things: sowing in the spring or begging in the fall,” motivation champion Jim Rohn said. But how do you break the grip of winter malaise to get sowing? Try these tips:

- **See the light** by opening blinds, using strong artificial lighting and taking a walk in daylight. Fresh air, even in bad weather, acts as a tonic.

- **Use a dawn simulation alarm clock**, which emits a light that gradually brightens in your bedroom for a half-hour before your wake-up time. University of Washington School of Medicine researchers theorize that this technique tells the brain to stop producing melatonin, which induces sleepiness and may be a major cause of winter blues.

- **Socialize with friends and family**, suggest Jeffrey Rossman, Ph.D., director of life management at Canyon Ranch in Lenox, Mass., and Mayo Clinic psychiatrist Mark Frye, M.D.

- **Exercise.** Even modest activity such as gardening or walking for 20 to 30 minutes a day helps, the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* reports.

- **Attack insomnia.** Depression and insomnia go hand in hand. Cognitive

behavioral therapy for insomnia, or CBT-I, is a breakthrough treatment with about 400 U.S. practitioners certified by the American Board of Sleep Medicine. CBT-I nurtures sleep by, for instance, teaching patients that being in bed is for sleeping (not watching TV, answering email, etc.), and to keep a sleep diary, reduce caffeine and alcohol, and use talk therapy to help realize the world won't end because of a bad night's sleep.

- **Eat a balanced diet** that includes lean protein and complex carbohydrates (fruits, beans, whole grains), and limit alcohol, sugar and high-fat foods, which provide a temporary pick-me-up but then quickly make you feel tired, Rossman says.

- **Eat expensive chocolate.** People who have the winter blues often crave the amino acid tryptophan, says professor Annie Farmer, who runs a seasonal affective disorder

(or SAD, a sometimes severe form of winter blues) clinic in London. “The amount of tryptophan chocolate contains is directly related to the amount of cocoa bean content,” Farmer says, and more cocoa beans increase the cost.

- **Take a tropical vacation!**

—Mary Vinnedge

For more ways to reverse the winter blues, see “Your Happiest Day Ever” on page 72.

TOP of Mind

I'm reading Thierry Malleret's book, *Disequilibrium: A World Out Of Kilter*. Earlier this year, I heard



professor Malleret speak at the Billion Dollar Roundtable, which I was fortunate enough to attend as a guest of our customer Ford

Motor Co. It is all about change in the business and political world. And what a changing world we live in! I'm wondering what the next years will bring and what innovations I can bring forward during those years.

—Hannah Kain, president and CEO, ALOM

In my business, I'm constantly focusing on what's the best way to leverage big data to *uniquely predict* customers' next moves before competitors can. To do this, we must either know something competitors don't know (which requires unique access to data) or to have the ability to extract unique insights from data that competitors didn't see. New consumer data types and streams are coming into the marketplace constantly—via websites, video, mobile, social, digital TV, wearables, etc. Keeping ahead of this deluge means we're in a continuous product innovation cycle. It's a good thing I'm addicted to speed! This is the only way to maintain the pace needed to win in a big data world.

—Omar Tawakol, CEO, BlueKai



I look at every sector of business and ask, “How would I improve this? What would I like to see as a customer or client?” Often, not only do I find no way to improve on the model, but I marvel at how well companies exceed in delivery of their promise and my expectations. Still, I think it's incumbent upon everyone in business to remember that every aspect of business and life can be improved—you just need a plan, then take the first step.

—John Leonasio, chairman of the board, Joint Corp.



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