

THE TOP 10 WAYS to LIFT YOUR MOOD WHEN YOU'RE FEELING DOWN in the DUMPS - By Dennis R. Tesdell

Everyone has periods in their life when they feel *down in the dumps*, blue, or mildly depressed, *especially* at holiday times, such as Christmas & Thanksgiving. Many people feel this way especially on New Years Eve due to perhaps a combination of alcohol, the end of a year that was not great for them, etc. These *down* feelings can be due to everything from some personal problems to business hassles to various weather changes or conditions. For those for whom these moods are short-lived and *not frequent* the following have shown to help boost one's mood and general outlook.

1. Socialize & Think Positively!

When a person is feeling blue or *depressed,* often the LAST thing they want to do is be around others or socialize. The fact is, however, when we are feeling blue or down, if we choose to isolate ourselves and hold up in our room or home, we will tend to focus on the same mental *tapes* that are causing us to feel down in the first place! If you will force yourself to call a friend and meet for coffee, a movie, a walk, a talk--anything to get out and change your atmosphere, the chances are good that will have a good effect on changing your mood for the better. For all but those who have a severe depression problem requiring a doctor's help and medication, try and remember, *We are what we THINK*. Our thoughts can propel us into ecstasy or into the depths of the *blues*. And MOST of us have control over our thoughts. It takes being conscious of them, and it takes practice. Remember: We are ALWAYS *at choice* as to thoughts, actions, etc.

2. Do Something Just For YOURSELF!

Be totally selfish here. Think of something you want to do for yourself...a short trip, a manicure, a haircut, buying yourself the coat or scarf you have been wanting. It does not have to be extravagant nor costly. The point is you are being GOOD to yourself, and that will sink in, and a part of your Self will say "Gee, I deserve this, and things are not so bad after all." This is not going to necessarily get to the root of what caused you to feel down or blue, but it will make you feel better long enough that maybe you can put the cause in a different perspective, or simply not take it as seriously!

3. Give Something To Another Person.

One of the best ways we can get beyond our own physical and emotional Self is to find something *bigger* than our own familiar problems upon which to concentrate! Think about your friends, relatives, the poor people in your church, or the local charities. Pick a person or cause that appeals to you and decide to give to that person or that cause. It can be your time or money, a toy, or whatever. Giving to others makes MOST people feel good in their heart. Feeling

good in our heart can have a great impact on how we feel in our MIND and body. It is the thought and the symbolism. The gift may be small, but the thought is all. You WILL feel better!

4. Rent Or Go See A Happy/Funny Movie.

Laughter has long been a quick and effective panacea for ills of all kinds. Medical studies show that it creates endorphins (body hormones that act as natural pain killers as well as *mood elevators*) as well as red blood cells and T-cells (the good cells which make up a part of the body's auto-immunue system and help us fight disease). When we laugh we also force our mind (although there is not any real struggle) to change modes and to be *UP* and to feel up, not down or blue or depressed. We substitute our own thoughts and feelings for those of the people on the movie or television screen. Watching an hour long comedy where we laugh and take our mind off our daily problems can last for hours or days as far as reducing chronic pain, a *blue mood* feeling, etc. It is cheap, easy, and, if we allow it to be-it is FUN!

5. Volunteer Your Time.

One of the best ways we can help pull ourself out of feeling sorry for ourselves, or feeling blue, or concentrating on our own aches and pains, is by helping other people who have problems of their own...often much more severe. It is very humbling to take a walk through a rehabilitation unit in a hospital at a time when we are complaining or feeling low due to an ache in our back or almost any other physical problem we might have. Most of the people we see are FAR worse off than we are, yet they are working, smiling, laughing, and talking...trying to do what they can to make the best of their situation. Giving time to others is a very good way to get *outside* of our own situation. Every city has volunteer bureaus and other places that need help, even if it is for an hour a day or a week! Giving to others will come back to us many times over in positive ways if we allow ourselves to try it.

6. Get Out Of The Past & Into The Present!

Most bad moods and mental attitudes are a result of what has happened to us in the PAST. This can be the recent past, or long ago. It is vital to your body and energy and Life as a whole that you stay in the PRESENT with your thoughts and feelings. The past is over! *Hanging onto* old hurts, pains, anger etc. will do you much harm emotionally and physically over time. We can CHOOSE to focus on creating a positive and healthy present for ourselves, or dwell in the past, creating anxiety, depressed moods, anger, guilt, etc. Do you want to live your life in the PRESENT or live it based on the past onto which you are still hanging? Let old hurts and pains and anger go! Doing so will free up all kinds of *positive energy* and your body and mind will have a chance to be MUCH healthier as a result!

7. Walk Or *Mall Walk* To Cheer Up.

Walking is prescribed by many doctors to help depression. Maybe your finances

are what have your down in the dumps. If that is the case, drive to the closest mall and walk and just look in the windows. Buy an "Orange Julius" or soda, sit on a bench and watch the people and the children. REALIZE that EVERY person you see has their own problems, and has days when THEY are blue or down. Some may feel much worse, and even be clinically depressed. *To do* is to take action. And taking action fights the blues and the *funk* one feels by sitting or lying down at home brooding indulging in self-blame or pity. Remember *misery loves company*? Well, at a mall you can be assured you have hundreds if not thousands of men and women who have felt or are FEELING just as bad or worse than you at the very time you are there! You are NOT alone. Life will go on...things can get better, You must make the choice to help MAKE them better however.

8. Call Someone You Like Who Is A "Positive" Person And Chat.

This option is alright as long as you do not *dump* on your friend, and as long as you do not abuse it. The idea here is to get OUT of yourself, and have some interaction, and hear about someone else's life, and take your mind off your own *stuff* for awhile. It's okay to let them know you are feeling abit low or down, and if they ask, you can tell them BRIEFLY what is going on. Just don't make it a long whining monologue! Ask them about THEIR life and job and family, etc. Get involved with someone ELSE, and your mind will take a turn as well. Let them talk about their life and current situation. If they are someone you see off and on in person, you might offer to get together with them for lunch, coffee, a movie, etc. sometime soon. The more you talk or listen to them and talk about things other than your OWN current situation, the better the chances are your mood will lift and you'll feel better after the call.

9. Meditate Or Listen To Relaxation or Positive Affirmation Tapes.

Meditation can be a very good way to change your mood. It works whether you are depressed/down, or anxious/hyper. I suggest taking a course or getting good quality tapes which teach meditation. It is amazing what it can do to quiet down the mind and release the stress caused by both anxiety AND depression feelings. Tapes on relaxation as well as self-affirmation by many well known expert authors are readily available through bookstores, some music stores, and also the *New Age* type book and music stores. Louise Hay and Wayne Dyer are two of the most well known authors of books and tapes on health issues, specializing in "positive thinking" and how they affect our physical and emotional health. They can be found in most book stores, or on the Internet at Amazon Books online at <http://www.amazon.com> The investment in these tapes is quite small compared to the benefits they can give the user.

10. Be CREATIVE!

Creating things alters our mood. It shifts us from the right side of our brain to the left side etc. Creating can be through cooking foods, painting (walls or on canvas or paper) making something using needle and thread, yarn, or Legos! It is also "creating" to play music if you are musical. Play what you wish as loud or

as soft as you wish. Make up a song. Music (hearing it or playing it) has long been used by people of all cultures to create or alter a mood. Whatever type of music makes you feel good...play it or create it. It WILL change your mood for the better if you allow it to and if you concentrate on the music and creating and forget how you have been "feeling."

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