

Fight the Post-Holiday Blues

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The transition from the holidays to the start of a new year can be difficult to navigate for many reasons. Post-holiday blues are just one reason why you might be feeling down this time of year. Do you remember Garfield the cat's famous hate for Mondays? Post-holiday blues have been compared to these "Sunday scaries" or the "Sunday blues," which are the letdown feelings that some people experience on Sunday because their weekend is ending. Similarly, post-holiday blues are the letdown feeling that many people experience after the holidays. According to [Colorado State University](#), this can be accompanied by lower energy, increased fatigue, and resistance to going back to work.

So, what can be done to combat the post-holiday blues? Dr. Crystal Schiller, an associate professor at UNC-Chapel Hill, recommends planning to spend time with a friend you did not see over the holidays, doing something small (like listening to your favorite music) to bring yourself joy, and getting tasks done. The final item in this list can help raise your spirits by bringing you a sense of accomplishment. Other things you can try to combat post-holiday blues include practicing gratitude daily, engaging in physical activity, and watching something funny. Both physical activity and laughter release endorphins, which have been described as "the body's natural painkillers" in [one article from Harvard Health Publishing](#).

Practicing mindfulness is yet another thing you can try to combat post-holiday blues. In his book *Wherever You Go, There You Are*, Jon Kabat-Zinn writes: "Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally. This kind of attention nurtures greater awareness, clarity, and acceptance of present-moment reality." He also writes that it "provides a simple but powerful route for getting ourselves unstuck." This route to getting unstuck is one that may be particularly useful in fighting post-holiday blues. Try committing just five minutes of your day to practicing mindfulness by focusing on your breathing and letting your thoughts float away like clouds. To learn more about practicing mindfulness, visit bit.ly/southwindmindfulness.

It is important to note that post-holiday blues differ from depression. If your symptoms worsen or do not go away, seek professional help. If you or someone you know is in crisis or seeking emotional support, call or text 988 to connect with the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. You can also chat with them online at 988lifeline.org/chat.

For more information, please contact me at clarawicoff@ksu.edu or 620-365-2242. To receive the "Wellness For You and Community, Too!" e-newsletter published monthly by

the Southwind District, visit bit.ly/southwindnews.

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