Surviving the end of winter guide.



If I could skip one month each year it would be February. The lack of sun, the lack of green, and the lack of warmth make me want to hide under the covers and wait for warm weather. When I shared this on my stories yesterday I was overwhelmed with how many of you felt the same way.

As the end of winter approaches, it's common for people to experience a drop in mood. This lack of sunlight and colder temperatures can take a toll on our physical and emotional well-being. During this time, it's important to take care of ourselves and prioritize our mental health, especially those last week of winter when we feel like we run on empty.

Getting outside and getting some fresh air and natural light can do wonders for our mood. Even if it's cold outside, bundling up and taking a walk can help lift our spirits. Exercise is also a great way to boost our mood and release endorphins.

But sometimes that just doesn't cut it, here are some of my fave ways to pull through till spring time is here and we can turn our heads to the sun again, like the wild sunflowers that we are. Prioritize nutrition - eating a balanced diet can help improve your overall mood and energy levels. I like to focus on anything that grows in the sun or looks like the sun, like oranges, grapefruit, lemons, berries, tomatoes, mangos, avocado and egg yolks.

Warming spices - like cinnamon, ginger, clove, nutmeg and turmeric into your meals can also help improve mood and keep the body warm. I love this in my smoothies and in my oatmeal. Also amazing in butternut squash curry.

Socializing can also help alleviate feelings of isolation or loneliness. Planning fun activities with friends or family can give us something to look forward to and help us stay positive. It's also important to practice self-care, whether that means taking a warm bath, getting a massage, or simply curling up with a good book.

Essential oils - citrus and floral oils are known to life the mood. I always have my diffusers going and love using oils like orange, tangerine, lemon, bergamot, ylang ylang, jasmine, rose and geranium. They make my house smell like a field of wild flowers in the summer. Herbs - can be a natural and effective way to combat the winter blues. Certain herbs have properties that can help improve mood and energy levels, reduce stress and anxiety, and promote relaxation. Here are some herbs that may be helpful during the winter months:

- St. John's Wort: This herb has been used for centuries to treat depression and anxiety. It is thought to work by increasing levels of serotonin in the brain, which can improve mood and reduce feelings of sadness or hopelessness.
- Ashwagandha: This herb is commonly used in Ayurvedic medicine to help reduce stress and anxiety. It is thought to work by regulating the body's stress response and promoting relaxation.
- Lemon Balm: This herb is known for its calming and relaxing properties. It can help reduce stress and anxiety and promote restful sleep.
- Rhodiola: This herb is commonly used to help improve mood and energy levels. It is thought to work by increasing the production of dopamine and serotonin in the brain.
- Chamomile: This herb is known for its calming and soothing properties. It can help reduce stress and anxiety and promote relaxation.

Vitamin D lamp by Sperti - this has been a saving grace for me since my body doesn't convert vitamin d from a supplement to it's active form. I really need sun rays on my skin in order to produce vitamin d and this lamp is the only one on the market that does that. The best investment I made. It only takes 5 minutes a day and it keeps your levels up during the winter months.

Infra Red Mat - In mid & end of winter it feels like the cold has settled in my bones. A hot shower and my infra red mat are the things to keep me warm. I got mine from Healthy Line because their mats also make use of gem stone therapy. I have a small mat for my office and a bigger one for our bedroom. It also works wonders on muscles and joint pain.

Indoor sunshine - I don't know if anyone else does this but since I was a little girl I would find spots in the house where the sun was shining through the windows. Just the feel of sunshine on our skin, even with a window in between it can provide warmth and lift our mood. Weirdly enough this really makes a huge difference in my mood. Next time you see the sun shining straight into your living room, put a blanket on the floor and bathe in it.

Finally, it's important to stay positive and focus on the good things in our lives. Which I know is challenging in those last few weeks.

Practicing gratitude can help shift our mindset and improve our overall well-being. By taking care of ourselves and staying positive, we can transition into spring with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

In addition to the tips mentioned above, there are some other things you can do to help combat the winter blues:

- Try something new: Learning a new skill or hobby can be a great way to boost your mood and combat feelings of boredom or restlessness. Take a cooking class, learn a new language, or try knitting.
- Practice mindfulness: Practicing mindfulness through meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises can help reduce stress and anxiety and improve your overall mental health.

• Meditation sessions: Meditation can be especially helpful during the winter months. To begin, find a quiet and comfortable place to sit or lie down. Close your eyes and focus on your breath, taking slow and deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you breathe, visualize a calming scene where you can field the sun on your skin, such as a peaceful beach or a field of wildflowers. If your mind starts to wander, gently bring your attention back to your breath and your visualization. You can also incorporate sounds of nature to really help you visualize a summer day.

Remember, the winter season is temporary and spring is just around the corner. By taking care of yourself and staying positive, you can beat the winter blues and transition into a new season with a renewed sense of energy and enthusiasm.

We got this!

Love, Iris