



# How to Survive the Winter Blues with a Smile

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The winter blues can affect you in a number of ways. Your experience could vary from a minor irritant, all the way up to severe depression or a seasonal affective disorder. This means that the winter blues is something to be taken seriously.

If you're concerned about feeling down this winter, ***you can go into the season with a game plan to get through it with a smile.***

## Why The Winter Blues?

The winter blues might affect you just because it's a cold season that can get tiresome after awhile. You may have to do some serious preparing just to travel outside and the lack of fresh air and indoor activities might make you weary.

Winter also follows a string of usually happy holidays. You might look forward to the holidays all year. Once they're over with, you might feel a little empty inside. Or perhaps, you find it difficult to begin a new year with a renewed attitude.

## How to Survive

With a proper positive attitude, ***you can sail through any situation.*** Even if the going gets rough, you know that better times are just ahead. The winter blues are certainly no exception!

**Try following some of these tips in order to beat the winter blues:**

- 1. Plan indoor activities.** If you're the type to go a little stir crazy after awhile, maybe you should brainstorm some new and exciting ways to have a good time indoors. You can invite your friends over to play board games, watch movies, or just chat.

2. **Make New Year's resolutions.** Some people toss off New Year's resolutions as *"not worth it"* because the majority of people forget about them after January. However, you can be the exception to this rule with the proper enthusiasm. ***Make some realistic goals for yourself,*** and as you achieve them, you'll likely beat the blues in the process.
3. **Maintain your health.** It's easy to forego healthy habits during the craziness of the holiday season. Festive treats are thrown around and you may not have time to continue your exercise routines.
  - If you've neglected your health during the holidays, then it's important to get yourself back into shape when they're over. When you're not treating yourself right, you won't feel right. This may be one of the reasons why you're having a challenge with the blues.
4. **Think positive thoughts.** Negative thinking clouds your brain and brings more negative things into your life, so it's important to stop these thoughts in their tracks. ***You have the power to turn it all around.*** If the blues have gotten you down, chances are that there's a silver lining somewhere. You just have to do a little digging to find it.
5. **Enjoy family time.** After the holidays, it's important to continue other traditions of family togetherness. While you might not always have the ability to eat meals together, it's vital to schedule some special time for everyone to share together.
6. **Plan ahead.** It may help to plan your next summer vacation. You might even find some excellent deals by booking your vacation early. You can then escape the winter blues by visualizing yourself enjoying your summer vacation. An exciting activity to look forward to also reduces those winter doldrums.

If the above suggestions don't bring you relief from the winter blues, remember that you can always talk with a counselor or coach about your feelings. ***The winter blues may affect you more severely than others,*** so, for your own sake, you don't want to let it go untreated.

In most cases, if you follow the tips above and make a conscious effort to engage in exciting activities during the winter, you can survive the winter blues and finally *enjoy* winter!