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Best ways to bust a bad mood

What's the best way to break out of a bad mood? According to renowned mood expert Robert Thayer, Ph.D., moderate exercise, listening to music and social interaction are the top-three ways to bust a bad mood.

Move your body

A bad mood has two major components, says Thayer, feelings of tension and low energy. Exercise can boost your mood by relieving tension, raising energy and increasing optimism. You don't need to be super fit to enjoy the mood-lifting benefits of exercise. According to Thayer's research, even a brisk 10-minute walk immediately increases your energy and improves your mood.

Listen to music

Music is second only to exercise in raising energy and reducing tension, according to Thayer. Music activates the part of your brain that is hardwired for pleasure and has a powerful influence over your state of mind. Thayer feels that music is underused as a highly efficient method of lifting mood. Any music you like works.

Seek social interaction

Social interaction also scores big when it comes to changing a bad mood and reducing tension. According to Thayer, humans are social animals and social interaction influences our mood. Social interaction is especially effective for women, who overwhelmingly report calling or seeing a friend, or initiating social interaction as an effective way to improve their mood.

Other methods to lift your mood

- Take a 10 to 30 minute nap. You will feel low energy when you first arise from a nap, Thayer says, but that will soon dissipate and leave you feeling refreshed.
- Immerse yourself in activity that distracts you from your bad mood. Sports, chores, hobbies and reading are all seen as useful activities to change a bad mood.
- Treat yourself to something that makes you feel good. A homemade facial, a luxurious steamy shower, a back massage, a warm cup of tea or hot cocoa – even the tiniest treat may pick up your mood.
- Laugh. There's no possible way that you can laugh and stay in a bad mood.

Your EAP is here to help

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