

A Yogi's Tips for Managing Winter Blues

Hi Jerica,

Even those of us not formally diagnosed with SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) might feel lethargic, down, and/or blue during the winter months. How can you support mental & emotional wellness during these darkest months of the year?

My first recommendation for those who suffer from the winter blues is to become a snowbird. Not in the cards? Don't worry – as someone who previously swore off winter but now has open arms to the season, I can tell you that your feelings are still manageable, and you're not alone.

There are a handful of ways I've found to bring more light and energy to the shorter and colder days. The first hurdle to managing your winter blues is *committing to trying* and not wallowing.

Having a plan or routine for the season and some tools up your sleeve will help you feel more in control of your day and emotions. Check out my list of tips to help boost you out of the blues and into bliss (or at least, healthy balance):

1. Movement / Yoga

Exercise is one of the number one anti-depressants. When negative attitudes and prolonged periods of physical stagnancy build up in your body, the best way to clear it up is to move it out. By increasing your heart rate and opening up your pores, you can expel any lingering energy, increase endorphins, and invite space for mental clarity.

If you're somewhere where the cold keeps you from your usual outdoor activities or getting outside for a long walk, give yoga or a fitness class a try. These movements can boost your mood, help relieve stress, and ease physical & mental tension.

Not sure where to start? Here's a list of [7 great exercises](#) to try - or if you're into yoga, see the full article for some poses to incorporate into your winter practice.

> Tip: Ever tried hot yoga as your winter sport? While it's not everyone's cup of tea, it became my #1 winter blues medicine. On cold and dreary days, I never had a problem getting myself to class and was excited to just be in a warm room.

Then I found that the heat helped my flexibility, I felt lighter after sweating it out, my practice expanded, and I was naturally more committed.



2. Herbal Teas

If you're finding it hard to relax, concentrate, sleep, or get motivated – there's an herb to help. Take time to do some research on what it is you want to balance out within yourself; then head to a local co-op to see what teas and herbs are available.

If you're looking for a sleep-aid, give chamomile or valerian root a try, or if you're in need of an energy booster, try a black tea, green tea, or Yerba Mate. St. John's wort is also a great herbal supplement for depression.

Getting into the habit of drinking tea in the mornings or evenings to give you a boost or mellow you out will help you even out over time and certainly get you to the other side of the winter season!

See [the full post](#) for the best teas for sleep – and the best teas for energy & focus.

> Tip: If you're looking to add some brightness to your day, try a turmeric and ginger blend with lemon & honey. Mmmm.

And if you haven't been incorporating turmeric into your diet already, you're going to want this magical root immediately! [Click here](#) to learn about it's array of medicinal properties.

3. Aromatherapy

Have you ever given aromatherapy a try or know much about essential oils? Since your olfactory system directly affects the part of your brain that regulates emotion, smells can trigger memories and affect emotions, making aromatherapy a useful tool to reduce stress & anxiety.

Like tea, essential oils can invigorate, calm, energize or relax the mind and body. A small diffuser in your bedroom or living room can go a long way.

[Here's a list](#) of the best essential oils to help you manage stress – or go with one of your favorite smells to boost your mood. Ylang Ylang and Juniper Berry are some of my favorites to brighten up a room but also put me at ease.

In addition to using a diffuser, you can look to lotions, salves, bath salts and incense to experience aromatherapy benefits.

> Tip: If you've never tried a lavender bath salt, add that to your 'ways to relax' list. Don't have a tub? Try hanging a bundle of eucalyptus on your shower head for a real at-home spa experience.



4. Eat Mindfully + Well

Ever heard of the saying 'good food, good mood'? A great way to boost your mood is from the inside out by eating well: look to foods that are rich in Vitamin D & Omega 3s, like fatty fish and egg yolks.

If you're snacking, curb your cravings for cookies by reaching for the right kind of carbs, such as lentils, brown rice, potatoes, or popcorn. These simple switches will help you keep your body energized and releasing the serotonin that will keep you happy (Eating Well).

Mindful eating & cooking is a great way to ground you in gratitude, add more structure to your day, and help you through the winter blues. It can be fun to find new recipes to try and cook with friends. Bring some light to your days with 'sunny' dishes – think yellows, citrus, and light-bright flavors like a Chicken Piccata!

Need some guidance? [Click here](#) for a list of 20 foods that will help you fight the winter blues.

> Tip: Add some lemon & parmesan to your popcorn, and eat that sunshine! :)

5. Seek Support

If you feel like the winter blues are just too much to handle on your own, seek support from loved ones or qualified health care professionals.

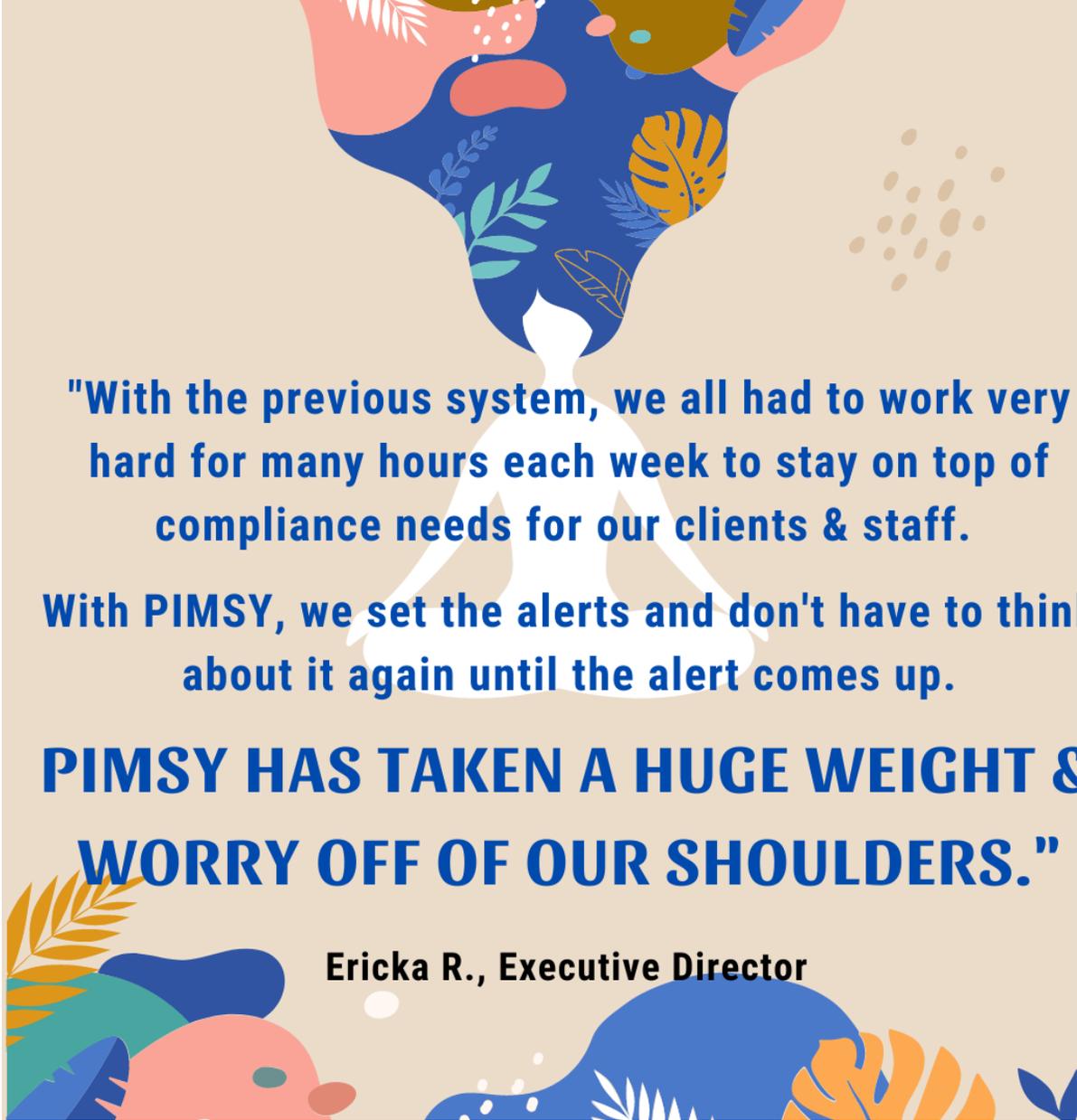
Talk to your doctor and see if medication, light therapy or additional mental health counseling is right for you.

[Click here](#) for references & more resources...

Happy New Year!!



**From all of us on the PIMSY Team, we wish you a happy & healthy new year, filled
with light & goodness!! ♥**



"With the previous system, we all had to work very hard for many hours each week to stay on top of compliance needs for our clients & staff.

With PIMSY, we set the alerts and don't have to think about it again until the alert comes up.

PIMSY HAS TAKEN A HUGE WEIGHT & WORRY OFF OF OUR SHOULDERS."

Ericka R., Executive Director