

## Banish a Negative Mood

You wake up to the sound of an annoying alarm, you're dead tired, and you just plain feel out of sorts. Ugh! How do you go out into the world—or even get out of bed!—when you are feeling so blah? April Durrett, IDEA contributing editor, and health, fitness and lifestyle writer shares mindful strategies that can help you shake off the blues.

### Use Mind-Body Methods

What can you do if you wake up on the wrong side of the bed? Try these strategies.

**Use Body Scanning.** “When you wake up, get in the habit of scanning your body,” advocates Linda Moseley of the Coaching Gym in Hurley, England, and Torino, Italy. “See if there is tension in your body. [Feeling out of sorts is] negative energy held in the body. Recognize tension as negative energy, and start to know exactly the intensity of this by scoring it on a scale of 1–10 (with 1 being very low negative energy and 10 being major reactive negative energy). Then, do the following: remember a time when you were at your best (on a positive energy scale of 1–10, choose a time when you would give a high score of at least an 8), and visualize it, [making] the pictures intense in color and the feeling warm and peaceful. Notice your breathing, and start to inhale on six counts and exhale on six.

Do this for the time that it takes you to get out of the bathroom and dressed. Smile and look up with your eyes to the ceiling, and keep them there with the smile for at least 30 seconds.”

**Meditate.** Mary E. Miriani, an ACSM health/fitness instructor at Reality Fitness Inc. in Naperville, Illinois, utilizes meditation to shift her mood. “I draw my attention to my breath, taking in positive energy with each inhalation and releasing negative energy with each exhalation,” she says. “Sometimes, doing this for 5 minutes is all it takes. If not, I picture a drawer, a closet and a window in my mind. I imagine putting small issues in the drawer, larger issues in the closet and things that are out of my control out the window, closing each in turn as I leave my problems to be dealt with either at a more appropriate time or by my higher power (those things I have no control over). I envision light pouring into the top of my head and down through my body, filling me with light that I will radiate out to the people I meet that day.”

### Pay Attention to Nutrition

If you ignore your daily nutrition needs, you may find yourself in a bad mood more often than you want. “On my wrong-side-of-the-bed days, I am particularly careful about my food selection,” says Pat Massey Welter, a personal trainer who owns Suncoast Pilates & Personal Training Center in Palm Harbor, Florida. “I need the time every morning to sit down in the café near my studio, have a cup of tea or coffee, eat a balanced breakfast of carbohydrate, protein and some fat, read the newspaper and reflect on the upcoming day. If I miss this routine, I have a hard time getting into the proper mood.” ■

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### For a Consistent Positive Mood

You can proactively work to shift things in your life so that your bad moods occur less often. “The only way you can change your mood is to make active attempts to do so,” says Mary Bratcher, MA, DipLC, of The BioMechanics in San Diego. “Instead of dwelling on dark or angry feelings, decide to focus your thoughts on coming up with solutions. For example, if the sound of your alarm clock makes you feel like smashing it to bits, don't continuously think about how much you hate your alarm clock. Instead, shift your thinking to what type of sound you would like to hear or the manner in which you would like to be awakened in the mornings. Then make a plan to get a new alarm clock or wake-up device.”

