

Title: Can Physical Activity Help You Triumph Over Lingering Holiday Blues?

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Can You Beat Seasonal Affective Disorder Once and for All?

The holidays are finally over. For some it's a good thing-- for others not so much. Were the holidays everything magical you'd hoped for? Filled with family and social events? While many anticipate that outcome, more often than not the joyous season *brings on the blues* that persist beyond the New Year's celebrations. Research shows that the holiday blues, also known as seasonal affective disorder, affects 10 million Americans each year. Mental Health America identifies headaches, irritability, excessive drinking, over-eating, and difficulty sleeping as symptoms of these blues. Can this wave of depression be beat? The answer is a joyful YES!

Sadness, anxiety, and loneliness - it's a rough way to start the New Year, but it doesn't have to be. Recent discoveries show the best way to overcome the holiday blues is a combination of three components: positivity, physical fitness, and social support--with emphasis on building a supportive tribe.

Pathologist expert, Melissa Conrad Stöppler, MD suggests embracing the present moment and "look to the future with optimism". Shawn Anchor, the avid researcher, author and speaker on positive psychology has concluded extensive research that supports this notion. "When we are positive, our brains become more engaged, creative, motivated, energetic, resilient and productive." The lesson learned? Stop living in regret and despair in what *should have been* these last few weeks, and start moving forward emphasizing on the good around you.

The next step: physical fitness. Be prepared to try something new. If the idea of aerobics or weight training doesn't lift you up, then search for something that will, because there's a wealth of studies that suggest the upside of physical activity. The best part is: you're not in this alone. The evidence shows those fifty and over are most influenced by clinicians, family or friends when it comes to

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increasing their activities. Doing so increases overall enjoyment and raises self-efficacy in all areas of life. Reach out to fellow peers or give me a call and we'll do a one-on-one consultation to address your goals or concerns. Check out our Fitness Tune-Up Sessions, a personalized program to jump start your exercise goals. Whatever the case, the key to climbing out of prolonged holiday blues is to remember you are not alone; especially when it comes to increasing your physical fitness.

Lastly, where would we be without our supportive circle? From this moment on, be prepared to use the tribe you have around you to build yourself up. The latest evidence from the International Journal of Sports and Exercise Psychology shows that not only is social support imperative to sticking to any exercise program, but in your overall livelihood. Whether its emotional support found in having a champion in your corner listening and providing encouragement, or practical support when a friend gives you a ride to the store or lends you a helping hand – we need one another to get the most out of this healing experience.

The holidays may be over, but any *blues* often left behind are a real thing. Take a deep breath, gain the encouragement you need from the social support of family, friends, and new acquaintances—and be ready more than ever to face the next 11 months without hesitation, confident in whatever plans you set in your horizon. Holiday blues be gone!

For more tips and fun ways to be active, reduce the pain and build energy, strength and balance in 2018, contact us. You can *also* refer to our FAQ page aka Questions and Answers, follow us on Facebook or check out our website at www.lorimichelfitness for other important fitness information, email us or simply call us at **818-620-1442** for a consultation.