

✓ 3 Ways to (Almost) Instantly Improve Your Mood

Right now, when social distancing makes a good hug hard to come by, try these other natural ways to boost your spirits!



1. Take a walk outside

A simple walk can provide a pleasant change of scenery while also stretching your muscles and improving your circulation. Brisk walking can make you feel better by releasing endorphins (the feel-good hormone) and boosting energy.

Walking in nature or other “green” spaces and basking in natural light has been proven to promote a calming, meditative mental state, improving mood.

Plus, studies show that exercise can have a positive impact on depression. Active people tend to experience lower depression rates, and exercise can be as effective as medication in alleviating long-term depression.



2. Look up and smile!

Even if smiling is the last thing you feel like doing, forcing a smile will make you feel better. How? The physical act of smiling sends messages to your brain to release “feel good” hormones. It also reduces stress, boosts your immune system, lowers blood pressure, improves digestion, and can even help you live longer!

Plus, when you smile, other people are more likely to smile back, which also lifts your mood.

The neurology of our “visual brain” is a bit complicated, but casting your eyes upwards can improve mood, creativity, and a sense of well-being. Builders of ornate cathedrals have known this for centuries. In the cell phone age, studies confirm that looking down damages mood, whereas looking up improves it.



3. Good foods and essential oils

Certain foods are proven mood-boosters, as well as some essential oils. Since up to 90% of your body’s production of the “feel-good” hormone serotonin is produced in your gut, foods matter. Mood-boosting foods include dark chocolate, salmon, oats, bananas, berries, nuts, seeds, coffee, and fermented foods. Overall, adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet has been shown to reduce depression.

Essential oils work by stimulating your sense of smell, which can discriminate between over a trillion different scents! Although the research is still limited, some essential oils have been used successfully to boost mood, including lemon oil, lavender, ylang-ylang, rosemary, basil, and clary sage.

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