

10 Tips to Turn Gloom to Glee



1. If you've been going for walks then don't put them off because of the weather. There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad gear! If you can work flexibly, plan a walk in the day and work half an hour later.
2. If the news and social media are getting you down, because of the negative messages, limit your time and exposure to them. Make a determined effort to switch off, take apps off your mobile and have a scheduled time that you stick to.
3. It's ok to feel a natural desire to slow down. We are designed to flow with the seasons, but we can often fight against this natural response. Know that it's normal to want to retreat in the winter months, as nature does. Allow yourself time to rest and retreat.
4. Make a diary date to check in with a friend and focus on how they are. Or consider volunteering to check up on someone vulnerable. Doing something for someone else will always lift your spirits. If you have the time you could volunteer to be a Check-in and Chat Volunteer for the NHS. You can make yourself available only when you have the time, so there is no heavy commitment.



5. Think of activities you can do in the evenings. Have you always wanted to write a book, knit a scarf, make your own cards? Anything creative will soothe your worries away and give you a sense of achievement and something to take your mind off negative thoughts.
6. Practice self-care, something that's a bit of a treat or luxury. Nice skincare, a long soak in the bath, sitting quietly reading a book. Doing whatever makes you feel good will help you have a contrast to not feeling good about yourself.
7. Consider taking supplementary vitamins to strengthen your immune system and prevent any deficiencies. According to the British Nutrition Foundation, approximately 1 in 5 people have a vitamin D deficiency as the levels that normally come from the sun are not enough in winter in this country. Also, make sure your intake of Vitamin C through fruit and vegetables and consider taking echinacea as well as a defence against colds.
8. Do an online exercise class such as yoga, pilates or tai-chi. It is relaxing and allows you to focus on something else apart from your anxieties and worries. If you've not been moving as much due to lockdown or sitting in a poor posture, then stretching will help to prevent muscle aches and pains as well as relieving symptoms of stress.
9. Plan something nice for a future date. Book a weekend break, your favourite restaurant or an activity you've always wanted to try. Even if you have to move the date, it will give you something to look forward to and give you the feelings of excitement, when something is coming up.
10. Write a handwritten letter to someone you know or even someone famous that you've always admired. Have no expectations of a reply, but you might be pleasantly surprised! Focus on how it might make that person feel to be on the receiving end. You could even gift membership of The Handwritten Letter Appreciation Society to encourage someone else to do the same.

