

BEAT THE JANUARY BLUES

Get through the holiday hangover.
By Bryony Taylor.

Christmas is over. The time of feasting, luxurious lie-ins and presents has swiftly left along with the memories of the office Christmas parties. New Year sweeps in with colder weather, less sunlight, and that irrepressible dread that in your hung-over state on January 2 you must get back on the work bicycle.

Some will have been wise enough to be at the front of the holiday booking queue for 2007 and still be wrapped up in bed for one more day as offices hum into life around the country, but for most going back to work after the holiday season can spark a long dark month of the depressive January Blues.

The hustle and bustle of the festive season which has kept you busy for the last month, both in a social capacity with all those festive parties and in having to survive the multitudinous shoppers to purchase presents for the ever growing list of friends and family, has ended abruptly. A barren social calendar stares back at you from your diary and it is all too easy to bemoan your freshly squeezed workload or lack of will power regarding those resolutions in the cold, miserable weather. Many workers face an emotional struggle to overcome the New Year blues and often resort to the luxurious spending of the gift certificates received as presents in an effort to pamper away those dreary days.

Feeling this low is common and it is now a significant medical condition: acute post-bank holiday depression syndrome, however according to the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology such doom, gloom and illness can be avoided simply by taking January 2 off work to survive the hung-over self pitying in your own time.

Indeed the year can start so badly for some that, according to The Samaritans, suicide levels are at their highest towards the beginning of the year. In recent years ICM Research conducted a survey via Expedia.co.uk which found that almost three quarters of Britons (73%) want the day after New Year's Day to be a new bank holiday, and 43% saying they suffered from depression during winter months.

One way of battling such feelings would be to include your fellow work colleagues in the January Blues camaraderie. People enjoy nothing more than bemoaning their work lives, and you may often find colleagues in similar states of mind who are approaching it with a slightly different attitude. Learning from them may benefit you.

Some choose to think about the future ahead. A new year means a brand new holiday quota. Spending time exploring future favourite possibilities of travel can give you a goal to aim toward and see you through the bleak winter period by putting a smile on your face. ■

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