

Why the Sunday Night Blues?



When Sunday night arrives, are you experiencing dread about going to work the next day? Is it because you don't like your job, or could it be depression? It can be hard to tell. There are different types of depression with different causes. But an assessment by a qualified professional or EAP can help you find out, usually in minutes. At the very least, you'll know the next steps to get out of the rut.

Other symptoms of depression that may appear job-related include not feeling as good at your job as you used to be, a desire to avoid coworkers, finding it hard to concentrate, and thinking your job is no longer exciting.

Getting Out of the Worry Loop

Worry is similar to an autoimmune response—attacking your thoughts with negative self-talk, frightening images, and fear. It can feel impossible to fight off or flee this negative feedback loop. Relief comes with a plan. Create one that targets the “what ifs” that are keeping you in turmoil. Experiment to see if this exercise empowers you and releases worry's grip. Write: “The problem or issue I am worried about right now is (describe the problem or threat). If this problem continues, these results may follow (list all realistic possible and adverse outcomes). To help prevent these things from happening, I will: (list action steps you will take.)”

Alone for the Holidays?

Alone for the holidays? Many people are fine being alone for the holidays. But if loneliness is an ongoing issue, don't accept it as “your fate” or something you “need to get used to.” Research on loneliness indicates it's a health hazard, like lack of exercise, and more dangerous than obesity. It can lead to depression, damage the circulatory system, and shorten lifespan. Tips: Do not reason your way out of feeling lonely. Don't fill the void with social media time. Instead, take action to engage with others. Need a plan to get going, or do you have a loved one who needs help? Talk to a professional counselor or your EAP, and develop a plan to plug into a fuller life. Check this out: www.campaigntoendloneliness.org.

Learn to Be More Attentive

The ability to focus (or be attentive) is a powerful skill. It's a key to high productivity, but it's also a difficult skill to master because it requires fighting distractions, which are always “here and now.” To better overcome distraction and loss of focus, practice these attention strategies: 1) Know your beginning and end point with a manageable size of work. Laboring without an end point increases vulnerability to distraction, which preys on fatigue and boredom. 2) Create a pull strategy—have a positive and compelling reason or reward at the end of your work period. This creates urgency, a force for action that thwarts distraction. 3) Have a secret place for minimal distraction—a library cubicle, someplace absent the pings and clicks of a smart phone. 4) Find meaning in your work. Know the importance of your job. It can motivate and inspire you to stay focused on what you are doing.

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