

FUNK

WORKS IN YOUR FAVOR

1

SADNESS UPS YOUR TENACITY

In one study, Australian researcher Joseph Forgas found that people who felt sad stuck with difficult tasks longer than folks who were chipper. His theory: When we're in a good mood, there's less incentive to seek out the buzz that comes from aching a tough project. On the flip side, being down offers natural motivation to hustle and make a change for the better. So the next time you get a case of the sads, consider what it might be telling you about where to direct your focus and energy. It might be a time to shake up parts of your life.

4

PESSIMISM HELPS YOU PREP

Seeing the glass as half empty could better prepare you for all the ways that glass could break. Some people are naturally good at using a strategy researchers have named defensive pessimism, which is basically thinking through everything that could go wrong in a situation and coming up with ways to handle it ahead of time. But anyone can learn how to do that. The benefit it gives you a sense of control and could help you perform better than if you just look on the bright side and dive in blindly, hoping everything will work out.

2

ENVY IGNITES AMBITION

Who doesn't face down the green-eyed monster now and then, especially with all that time we spend scrolling through our friends well-curated lives on social media? Still, a little bit of envy IRL can be useful, prodding us to step up our game. When participants in a series of studies were pushed to think about the times they'd felt envious, their performance on tasks improved. To consciously get the same effect, first figure out exactly what you're envious of. It often has nothing to do with what someone else has; rather, it's your desire to feel a certain way, says Lori Deschene, author of *Tiny Buddha's Gratitude Journal*. Pin that down, she says, and you can stop attaching yourself to another person's vision and focus on getting what you need.

5

BUMMED OUT? YOU'LL SPOT LIARS BETTER

When we're in a happy bubble, we're more likely to take people at face value and assume that what they say matches up with their true intentions. Negative emotions, on the other hand, crank up our BS meter. In a study in the journal of *Experimental Social Psychology*, participants who saw a sad flick before watching suspects get interrogated about a theft were significantly better at spotting liars than those who tuned in to a comedy. Sadness even cuts down on the so-called halo effect, in which folks tend to assume that someone with one positive feature (like a handsome face) is likely to have others, says Forgas. Lesson here: When you're feeling sunny, keep in mind that your judgment about the "great deal" you're being offered might be flawed.

3

BLUE MOODS LET YOU ZOOM IN ON DETAILS

When you're sitting on top of the world, it can be harder to see what's happening down below. Happiness can blur our focus and increase the odds that our brain will incorporate misleading info into our memory, Forgas says. Being in a bad mood, on the other hand, helps us ditch the rose-colored glasses and home in on details we'd otherwise miss. It might also give us a sharper eye for potential drawbacks. In a 2015 experiment, participants who were feeling fleeting anger, sadness, fear, or disgust were better at rejecting unfair offers than people who felt happy, surprised, or neutral in that moment. So as tempting as it is to Netflix your way through a blue mood, now might be a good time to knock out a discerning task, like browsing real estate listings.

6

ENNUI KICK-STARTS CREATIVITY

When British researchers asked their subjects to read or copy numbers from a phone book (yawn!) and then tested their creative thinking, they found that the bored participants had more ideas than the non bored control group. In another study, people who watched a monotonous video before taking a creativity test performed better than those who were relaxed, elated, or distressed. It makes sense, because boredom prompts people to look for what's fresh and interesting, even if they have to create it for themselves. In fact, Todd Kashdan, Ph.D, coauthor of *The Upside of Your Dark Side*, recommends this mantra for anyone trying to be at ease with the doldrums: Boredom is the launching pad of new ideas.

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