

**Appreciate:** Stop comparing yourself to others and appreciate the gifts you have in your life.

**Be in the moment:** Instead of stewing because you are stuck in traffic, think about something that is good about your circumstances right now. Maybe your favorite song is on the radio, or you have more time to think through a big presentation. Switch your mind to focus on the positive instead of the negative.

**Change your commute:** Dealing with traffic can be a huge drain, but if you are able to walk or bike to work, according to research, you will arrive more cheerful and focused. If that is not possible, listen to an audio book to give your brain a mental getaway.

**Dance:** University of Derby researchers found that depressed people who took salsa lessons improved their moods, and an Australian study found that people who learned to tango had less depression and insomnia and greater life satisfaction.

**Experience it:** Instead of spending money on another sweater, spend the money on a night out with friends. Experiences, especially those shared with others, make you feel more connected. Plus, they will never shrink in the dryer.

**Forget about it:** Making amends and forgiving those who have done us wrong yields a number of physical and mental benefits. Holding onto grudges roots us in the past and keeps us in a state of anger and resentment. Embrace forgiveness and move forward.

**Grin:** When you smile you stimulate the muscles that sends nerve signals to your brain that you are happy.

**Hike:** Spending time outside makes you feel less tired and more alive. Twenty minutes of outdoor activity is all it takes!

**Inhale:** Do this three times an hour: breathe in through your nose for four counts, hold your breath for one, and exhale through your mouth for five to lower your heart rate and blood pressure.

**Journal:** Jotting down what you are feeling grateful for at the end of the day can make you feel more optimistic.

**Kiss:** Kissing stirs up positive feelings whether it is a smooch or a peck. Neuroscientists think our earliest experiences with lip stimulation, through nursing as infants, lay down neural pathways in our brains that associate kissing with comfort.

**Light it up:** If the sun is shining, open the shades or better yet, go outside. When people increased their exposure to bright light, they argued less and felt happier.

**Make your bed:** Doing even one thing to enhance your sense of order is calming.

**New ideas:** Give yourself the opportunity to be exposed to new ideas by hosting round table discussions, attend a local presentation or networking event.

**Open an orange:** Olfactory nerves link directly to your brain's limbic system, which governs emotion and memory. Some scientists suggest that the smell of an orange can calm, or even take the anxiety out of a dental visit.

**Pick up the tab:** Treating a friend to a cup of coffee offers a bigger happiness boost than hitting the café' solo. Spending just \$5 on another person can make a significant difference in your mood by the end of the day.

**Quiet time:** If you are stressing over a deadline, put down the project and allow yourself to step away. Your brain needs regular breaks to maintain peak functions so by giving yourself permission to take a break allows creative solutions.

**Rub down:** A massage can send you into a state of mental bliss. Researchers show that it can improve your body image – and in as little as five minutes, ease anxiety.

**Save up:** The clink of coins in the piggy bank allows you to get pleasure in seeing your savings grow and if you are saving up for something special, you also get the benefit of satisfaction of the anticipation.

**Tune in:** Listening to upbeat music with the goal of boosting your mood really works according to research. Any tune will do, as long as it lifts your spirits.

**Unplug:** Staying tethered to your smartphone can interfere with your relationships and your sleep. Both are key to happiness; so stop using your phone as an alarm clock.

**Vacation:** Planning a vacation has mood-boosting effects in two ways. One you get the benefit of relaxing on the beach with Mai tais, but people also experience joy in just thinking about the anticipation of the trip.

**Wine:** Cheers! Spanish study found that people who drank two – seven glasses of wine a week were less likely to get depressed.

**X-press yourself:** Pick up a pen or paintbrush and let loose. Expressing yourself creatively can reduce fatigue and even depression.

**YouTube it:** Take a break and watch a GrumpyCat video. Clips that make you laugh release feel-good endorphins and reduce stress hormones.

**Zzzzzzz:** Sleep plays a huge role in your mental state. Studies show that you are happier on the days after you have slept well on versus the days you have slept poorly.