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Article

New Year’s resolutions: Wait until Spring... and is 'Blue Monday' real?

Monica Nelson • January 02, 2024

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'Blue Monday', supposedly the saddest day of the year (*and also a New Order song that truly slaps*), falls on the 3rd Monday of January. Its the day where the post-holiday blues have set in, the nights are dark, cold and you're facing the likelihood you've already failed your new year's resolutions. You'll find loads of tips online for how to overcome this awful day, but did you know it was invented by a travel company?

Samar McCutcheon, MD, an Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, called the whole thing a “marketing gimmick.” Even if this is apparent to most people, there are dangers in declaring a single day as the most of anything for everyone. McCutcheon related, “The disadvantage of labeling a particular day ‘the most depressing day of the year’ is it can minimize the experience people have with depression during the remaining days of the year.”

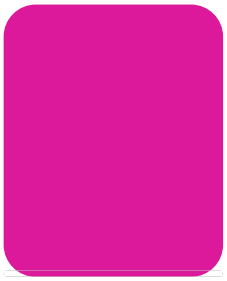
While raising awareness for mental health, especially during common vulnerable periods, is ultimately a good thing, gimmicky social media trends are not always scientifically viable. The same thing can be said for the ever popular, "New Year, New Me" trend that falls during the most inappropriate season : **winter**.

“January is probably the hardest month of the year to change behaviors,” says Tim Bono, lecturer in Psychological & Brain Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis. Brutal weather, flu season, reduced sunlight are all ways nature is telling you to hibernate. It truly goes against nature to set goals in winter. Professor Bono says you can still have your resolutions, but recommends to action them during a

more cooperative season.

“There’s nothing wrong with postponing a few months and trying again when the environmental circumstances will be a bit more conducive to working toward your goals."

Every year, millions of people around the world make resolutions to improve their physical and mental health. They join gyms, start diets, meditate, or practice gratitude. They also share their journeys on social media, using hashtags like #wellnesswednesday or #mentalhealthmonday. But are these trends really helpful for our wellbeing? Or are they just adding more pressure and unrealistic expectations to our already stressful lives? In this blog post, we will explore some of the pros and cons of the wellness craze and offer some tips on how to make sustainable and meaningful changes for your health and happiness.



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