

Boost your mood

It's November. It's cold, dark, and very, very grey. The weeks are filled with endless assignments, frustrating group projects, hours of staring at your laptop screen, and most likely a lot of reading. Asha, a final year History student, looks at how to improve your mood when it starts getting dark at 3pm.

Every year without fail, I fall into the same mid/end of semester slump. And this semester, when we are staying inside way more than before and there is less to look forward to, I definitely rely on a lot of ways to boost my mood. Sometimes I just have to resort to lying in my bed, but most of the time these work pretty well for me!

Talk to your friends and laugh

If you're struggling to keep your mood up during the semester, make sure you make time to talk and laugh with people who boost your mood. Try and avoid talking about deadlines or classes and take a bit of time to think about other things that make you smile. This could be playing a game, walking up one of Edinburgh's many hills, or just going for a coffee!

Go for walks in nature or change your surroundings

It's amazing how much getting out of your room and changing your surroundings can affect your mood. If you are stressed or anxious about deadlines, try taking a long walk and stretch your legs. Holyrood park is a great place to do this, and the beautiful views of the city can help clear your head. Just being surrounded by trees can really help me to feel a lot better. If you need a change of workspace try going to a café or a different library that you haven't been to before – this could help you get some new ideas and boost your mood.

Sometimes I find it really easy to get to the end of the day and realise that I've spent most of my day staring at a

screen, whether that be my laptop or phone. Try and take a bit of time away from screens and giving your brain a rest.

Be kind to yourself and take a day off!

When I'm feeling really stressed and I am looking for small ways to boost my mood, treating myself to small things can really help. Taking a day off, or lighting a few candles, or buying yourself some cake can be the little mood booster that you need to regain the will to live.

Cook yourself a tasty and healthy meal

Cooking for yourself and looking after your body are really important parts of self-care and cooking a tasty meal for yourself after a hard day can really boost your mood. For me, this is a chance to have an hour away from my phone or laptop, and either spend some time in my thoughts, or even better, enjoy the company of your flatmates and cook for them! I find cooking really therapeutic, and even if you don't think you're very good at cooking, challenge yourself one day to cook something, it can really transform your mood!

Finally – ask for help!

Whether it's from friends, family, tutors or student support, there are loads of people out there willing to help you. If you're stressed about an assignment, do not hesitate to contact your tutor, and do not forget, it's their job to help you!



Find even more inspiration to keep your mental health and wellbeing healthy

'Let's Talk Mental Health and Wellbeing' runs 9-27 November with events and ideas to support mental and wellbeing. Find out more on the EUSA website, www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/letstalk

The University's Health and wellbeing pages are a great source of information and support, www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing

Keep moving without leaving the room with live streamed exercise classes courtesy of the Sport & Exercise team, www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/live-streaming-exercise-classes