

Just another **manic** Monday

Got the Monday morning blues? Here's why and how you can beat that feeling of gloom

Words SHEREE GOMES GUPTA



Photograph GETTY IMAGES



*“Just another manic Monday,
oooooooooh oh oh
Wish it was Sunday,
oooooooooooooooooh oh oh
Cause that’s my fun day, oooooooooooooh oh
My I don’t have to run day, oooooooooooooo oh
Just another Manic Monday...”*

The Bangles were bang on with their 1986 hit ‘Manic Monday’. Ever since I can remember, Mondays have never been my favourite day of the week. And nothing – not age nor a professional life, motherhood or even quitting it all to be a stay-at-home-mum a few years ago – could shake the feeling of gloom I felt on the first day of the week.

Almost like clockwork, a dreaded sensation would creep in slowly, but surely, on Sunday evenings. Even during holidays, it would be difficult to shake off the blues at the start of yet another new week. World over, Mondays have been getting a bad rap for decades now. Irrespective of age, nationality, sex and financial background, it’s the one day of the week that we all love to hate. In fact, so huge is this phenomenon that scientists have now come up with a logical explanation for this man-made malaise – apparently our internal clocks automatically operate on a day that is longer than 24 hours, so by the time it’s Monday we are almost always sleep-deprived by an hour.

Psychotherapist Varkha Chulani, however, thinks the ‘Monday morning blues’ syndrome is overrated. “It’s a socially repeated ideology or message that has been drilled into our heads, nothing more. Fortunately not everyone suffers from this blues, some of us actually love Mondays. For those who don’t, it’s time to change your mindset. See how you can do things differently this week compared to the last and get more enthusiastic about the days ahead,” she says.

Despite her opinion, it’s hard to dismiss the fast-growing Monday-hating tribe. So how should we combat the ‘Monday Morning Blues’? “Start drinking by 10 am itself,” says Mumbai’s renowned author Siddharth Dhanvant Shanghvi. “Your life is going to fail, people you love will let you down, your boss is a horror, the world will be warmer and uglier before you’re through

with your years: all this you know,” he says, adding on a more serious note, “What you don’t know is how ephemeral joy is, how ambivalently short life is, so stop worrying about that first mundane morning of the week. It should be the least of your concerns. Today will end. Live a little. Have a drink on me.”

In a study by Marmite published by *The Telegraph* a while ago, the top five ways of getting over that horrible Monday feeling are watching TV, sex, online shopping, buying chocolate or make-up and lastly, planning a holiday. For TV personality Mandira Bedi, however, detoxing is the biggest priority on a Monday. “I actually look forward to this day. After all the partying and indulgence of the weekend, I am ready to get back to my fitness routine.”

It’s not all about getting back on track though. For her, a Monday is about exciting, new possibilities. “It’s the start

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of a new week, new beginnings...to be honest I love Mondays,” she says.

Celebrity photographer Vikram Bawa and educationist Sujay Jairaj tackle Mondays quite differently. While most of us crib and cry over what lies ahead, both professionals take the day head-on. “I don’t really think about what day it is...I just plunge into work and before I know it the day is over,” says Vikram, of course adding that he does drag friends out to movies on Monday evenings whenever he can.

The key, says Sujay, is to maintain a disciplined lifestyle, where work and play balance each other out perfectly. “Whether it’s a trek or cycling with my group, or just hanging out with friends, my weekends are always extremely interesting. This makes it easier for me to look forward to Mondays. I generally

keep weekdays very simple – badminton in the mornings, then work, and then home for dinner,” says the young trustee of Mumbai’s prestigious Jamnabai Narsee School.

Unlike Bawa and Jairaj though, Nikhil Agarwal, sommelier and director of All Things Nice [a platform for wine appreciation] tries to break away from routine on a Monday. “I may go out for lunch to some place nice or open a nice wine in the evening or even go for a movie,” he says, adding, “All Things Nice has seen an increase in its patrons having wine or single malt pairing and tasting sessions (private tasting sessions) on a Monday in order to make their Mondays more exciting.”

Nutritionist to the stars Pooja Makhija puts forth another interesting fact, which she says contributes to the Monday morning blues. A fat hangover! Yes, you heard right. “When you eat a very high fat meal for dinner on any night it takes a lot of time and exertion through the night to digest that food. You feel drained, and end up waking up tired and lethargic even if you’ve got adequate rest. So definitely try and keep Sunday night meals light.”

She has other tips too to beat the Monday morning blues: Schedule your Mondays (including your food plan) on Friday nights itself so you are not stressed on Monday mornings, keep Sunday evenings light and sleep early, and definitely exercise on the weekends even if it means swimming with the kids, playing tennis with the spouse, or walking in the park with friends, so that getting back to a fitness routine on a Monday doesn’t become a big deal bvbhvb.

All said and done, however, she says the most important thing is to look at Mondays as a new start. “Whatever you promised you’d do the week before and never did, use Mondays as an opportunity to fulfil those dreams, be them personal or professional. You have a fresh start, so what better high than that to get you through the whole week?” she says.

As for me, my eight-year-old, an early and ‘active’ riser is the only reason I now no longer dread a Monday. His energy is infectious and leaves me almost as charged as he is, to tackle the new week ahead. ■