

The Counselor's Corner

BLAH!

With some exceptions, January seems to be good to me. I celebrate my birthday, make contact with my friends, pick up some freebies at local restaurants, and shop the super clearances. Although I am enjoying myself, I feel that something is amiss this year, and the stars are not lining up properly.

First, I see changes in some of the students. They seem tired, and they are impatient. Some of the younger ones act like they are in school for the first time instead of the first time after break. They liked their vacation routine. In contrast, getting up early and having a schedule filled with work and learning doesn't seem to fit their lifestyles. A couple students even devised clever but short-lived attempts to get themselves out of school by faking illnesses. January, you are the spoiler of fun!

Second, January brought us the Inauguration. At the very least, this meant change. Many wiped their tear-stained faces as President Obama and his family boarded the helicopter and waved good-bye. Others, heard the tune "Beat It" play in their heads. Then, in spite of votes being counted and an election won, many seemed shocked that the man who promised to "Make America Great Again" took the oath. Others thought greatness would more likely have come from the woman in the white pantsuit. And, unlike any election or inauguration I have seen, the American people seem so divided. How can this not take a toll on our psyche?

Third, those in the health profession explain January crabbiness in terms of Seasonal Affective Disorder, a time when the dark and rainy clouds seem to move into our minds. People buy lamps to fill homes with artificial sunlight in an attempt to compensate for the way Nature has robbed us of the real deal. Some see doctors, because this is a verified and often serious disorder. Therapy and proper prescriptions can come to their aid. Other healthy conscious people talk about how we are coming down from careless eating and drinking throughout the holidays and need to delve more into fruits and vegetables, approach exercising seriously, and fill our nights with restful sleep.

A fourth explanation was posted by Claire Millerick in December 2015. She feels January is a month that could be skipped. When she rips open her new calendar and sees that month taking the lead, she greets it with a "fake smile". She says it is boredom and darkness, and it is a month that never seems to end. Millerick feels that irritability in January comes from the expectation that we are "...somehow supposed to be bettering ourselves through New Year resolutions....," yet we often miss the mark. I feel January is a mirror that doesn't lie. We are sometimes like the Wicked Queen in Snow White who gazed into her looking glass and discovered she wasn't the belle of the ball anymore. When we falter on resolutions, our personal mirrors reflect where we are and taunt us under bleak, gray, wintery skies.

Whatever theory we select, we must realize the need to compensate for the lack of sparkle in this month. If our feelings are making us immobile and depressed, there is no choice. We must seek the help of a doctor. In less severe situations, we must remember that controlling our reaction to things is a godsend. Let us be smart by avoiding those who are toxic and are trying to lure us into their gloomy worlds. Let us be kind by giving others some wiggle room when they have an occasional bad day. Let us be the sun by going out of our way to greet others with a smile and a sense of humor. Only then will we remove the blah out of this month.

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