

COOL YOUR CABIN FEVER

Four easy ways to keep the walls from closing in.

First the holiday season makes you grumpy, then winter crankiness sets in: hostility, irritability, and anxiety all rise during the winter months as short days and bad weather trap us inside. Here are some simple strategies to keep you from going stir-crazy.

Swallow Some Sunshine - When winter sunlight wanes, your body's level of vitamin D can dip too – bad news, since the vitamin helps you make serotonin, a brain chemical needed for a good mood. Studies at the University of Toronto and the University of Newcastle in Australia found that vitamin D supplements boosted moods markedly. Some experts recommend a daily supplement containing 1,000 to 2,000 IUs of vitamin D for improved perkiness.



Hug a (Rubber) Tree - Working near potted plants lowered people's stress and made their outlooks rosier in studies conducted at the University of Surrey in England. "There is an important link between nature and feelings of well-being." Explains David Uzzell, Ph.D., professor of environmental psychology at the university.

Brew the Right Thing - Green tea's the richest known natural source of theanine, an amino acid found to boost alpha brain waves – the kind associated with relaxation. "Theanine can enhance concentration and clarity, so it actually increases mental alertness while reducing stress," says Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic*.



Perfume the Room - People on cramped spaces perceived them as bigger – and experienced less anxiety about them – when the air was infused with cucumber or green-apple aromas, researchers at Chicago's Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation found. (The smell of roasting meat actually increased claustrophobic feelings.) Lighting an appropriately scented candle will do the trick. *Melissa Gotthardt*

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"My memory really sucks Mildred, so I changed my password to "incorrect." That way when I log in with the wrong password, the computer will tell me... "Your password is incorrect"

