

## Fluency Files #67: *Mood boosters*

### Fill-in-the-blanks listening practice

**Andrew:** Life can be a series of \_\_\_\_\_ and valleys. There are highs and lows and twists and turns which make it a real wild ride. And from time to time, we can all feel down, and we all have our own unique ways of trying to bring \_\_\_\_\_ and positivity into our lives. Things that make us feel like we're back on track and help us to boost our mood and feel happier or healthier. In this episode, I'll let you in on five of my favorite mood boosting \_\_\_\_\_ that are my go-to's whenever I'm feeling stressed, tired, or blue. Here we go.

This probably comes as no surprise to many listeners, but when my mood needs a lift there's nothing quite like going outside, getting some fresh air, and running. For me running isn't just exercise, but it's also a kind of moving \_\_\_\_\_. I can forget, at least most of the time I can forget, I'm not always successful but I try and forget my stress and instead focus on my \_\_\_\_\_, my steps, and the path ahead. After a good run, I feel mentally refreshed, accomplished, and I often find that my emotions soften too. I feel more \_\_\_\_\_ and more sympathetic.

Number 2: Taking a nap. If I'm ever in a bad mood, it's usually because I'm tired. So, napping is so, so essential when I feel drained or \_\_\_\_\_. It's my way of giving my body and my mind a break. Lately, I've just been taking 10-to-15-minute naps at my desk. Yeah, at my desk. When it's time for a break, I put on my headphones, I turn on a YouTube power-nap video that plays some background, brown noise, and I pass out for just a few minutes. Sometimes I'll only fall asleep for 5 minutes or so, but it does the trick. A power nap like that can help me to charge my batteries and allow me to return to

my tasks with clarity and \_\_\_\_\_. It's amazing how just a little \_\_\_\_\_ can turn a rough day around.

Number 3: Having a snack. There's no doubt about it, for me food has a huge influence on my mood. When I'm feeling down or \_\_\_\_\_, it's likely because I'm hangry. Have you heard that word before? It's a combination of hungry and angry and it describes the feeling of being in a bad mood because you're hungry. So, when I'm hangry, I always reach for a snack. These days my go-to snack is a banana or sometimes two bananas. And even though I personally think that other snacks like junk food, like cookies or donuts are more delicious, I find that I usually feel \_\_\_\_\_ after eating them. On the other hand, if I reach for some fruit like a banana, I usually feel better. So, to boost my mood, fruit is the best.

Number 4: Standing in the Sunshine. Whenever possible, I make it a point to step outside and \_\_\_\_\_ up some sunshine. There's something just amazing about feeling the sun's \_\_\_\_\_ on my skin and it's an instant mood booster. I usually try to do this in the morning when I first wake up. Of course, it's easier in the summer than in the winter, but I do my best regardless of the season. I close my eyes, I let the sun's rays wash over my face, and I trip out a little bit about the fact that there's this huge, \_\_\_\_\_ star 150 million kilometers away that helps me to start my day in a good way.

Number 5: Watching a Funny Video Clip on YouTube. We all need a good laugh now and then and YouTube is my go-to place for an instant \_\_\_\_\_ of humor. Usually, I watch a performance or an interview with one of my favorite comedians. People like Norm McDonald, Dave Letterman, Conan O'Brien, or someone like that. There are a whole bunch of comedians that I enjoy, but there's nothing quite like a good laugh to cheer you up, boost your mood, and make you feel more positive.

So, these are the five things that I turn to whenever I need a mood boost. They're \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ methods that work for me, but we all have our own

individual ways of finding happiness in our lives and it's important to discover what works best for you. So go ahead, find your own mood boosting methods and let them help you to become a happier and more positive version of yourself.

## Transcript

**Andrew:** Life can be a series of peaks and valleys. There are highs and lows and twists and turns which make it a real wild ride. And from time to time, we can all feel down, and we all have our own unique ways of trying to bring balance and positivity into our lives. Things that make us feel like we're back on track and help us to boost our mood and feel happier or healthier. In this episode, I'll let you in on five of my favorite mood boosting rituals that are my go-to's whenever I'm feeling stressed, tired, or blue. Here we go.

This probably comes as no surprise to many listeners, but when my mood needs a lift there's nothing quite like going outside, getting some fresh air, and running. For me running isn't just exercise, but it's also a kind of moving meditation. I can forget, at least most of the time I can forget, I'm not always successful but I try and forget my stress and instead focus on my breath, my steps, and the path ahead. After a good run, I feel mentally refreshed, accomplished, and I often find that my emotions soften too. I feel more charitable and more sympathetic.

Number 2: Taking a nap. If I'm ever in a bad mood, it's usually because I'm tired. So, napping is so, so essential when I feel drained or overwhelmed. It's my way of giving my body and my mind a break. Lately, I've just been taking 10-to-15-minute naps at my desk. Yeah, at my desk. When it's time for a break, I put on my headphones, I turn on a YouTube power-nap video that plays some background, brown noise, and I pass out for just a few minutes. Sometimes I'll only fall asleep for 5 minutes or so, but it does the trick. A power nap like that can help me to charge my batteries and allow me to return to my tasks with clarity and enthusiasm. It's amazing how just a little snooze can turn a rough day around.

Number 3: Having a snack. There's no doubt about it, for me food has a huge influence on my mood. When I'm feeling down or irritable, it's likely because I'm hangry. Have you heard that word before? It's a combination of hungry and angry and it describes the feeling of being in a bad mood because you're hungry. So, when I'm hangry, I always reach for a snack. These days my go-to snack is a banana or sometimes two bananas. And even though I personally think that other snacks like junk food, like cookies or donuts are more delicious, I find that I usually feel worse after eating them. On the other hand, if I reach for some fruit like a banana, I usually feel better. So, to boost my mood, fruit is the best.

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So, these are the five things that I turn to whenever I need a mood boost. They're tried and true methods that work for me, but we all have our own individual ways of finding happiness in our lives and it's important to discover what works best for you. So go ahead, find your own mood boosting methods and let them help you to become a happier and more positive version of yourself.

## Glossary

1. **Peaks and valleys:** High and low points in life.
2. **Twists and turns:** Unexpected changes or challenges.
3. **Wild ride:** A life full of unpredictable events.
4. **Mood boosting:** Actions that make one feel happier or more positive.
5. **Go-to's:** Preferred choices or solutions.
6. **Blue:** Feeling sad or depressed.
7. **Charitable:** Showing kindness and understanding towards others.
8. **Sympathetic:** Understanding and caring for someone else's suffering.
9. **Overwhelmed:** Feeling unable to deal with too much stress or too many tasks.
10. **Do the Trick:** Successfully achieve the desired result or effect.
11. **Charge my batteries:** Rest or relax to regain energy.
12. **There's no doubt about it:** Used to express total certainty about something.
13. **Hangry:** A blend of hungry and angry, referring to being irritable due to hunger.
14. **Make it a point to [do something]:** Make a special effort to do a particular thing.
15. **Soak up:** Absorb or take in.
16. **A good laugh:** A genuine laugh that makes one feel happy and relieved.
17. **Tried and True:** Proven to be effective or reliable through long use or experience.

## Key expressions

### 1. Back on track

**Meaning:** To resume making positive or successful progress after facing challenges or setbacks.

**Usage:** This expression is often used when discussing personal or professional goals and the actions taken to overcome obstacles.

**Example sentences:**

1. After a period of distraction, I needed to get back on track with my studies to improve my grades.
2. When life throws unexpected hurdles, it's essential to refocus and get back on track towards your long-term goals.
3. After an unproductive week, I'm determined to get back on track with my work and achieve my targets.

### 2. Trip out

**Meaning:** To experience very strong emotions or reactions, usually because of something surprising, confusing, or amazing.

**Usage:** This expression is informal and is commonly used when describing moments of being surprised, amazed, or slightly disoriented. It can also be used when someone is under the influence of drugs and experiencing an altered reality, but it's not always used in this context.

**Example sentences:**

1. When I look at the night sky, I sometimes trip out at the vastness of the universe and our place in it.

2. She tripped out when she saw her favorite celebrity at the mall.
3. Listening to the professor's lecture on quantum physics can make your mind trip out with its mind-bending concepts.

### Comprehension questions

1. What physical activity does Andrew do to lift his mood?
2. When Andrew feels tired or overwhelmed, what short activity does he do?
3. What does Andrew usually eat as a snack when he's feeling down or irritable?
4. What does Andrew do to boost his mood, involving sunlight?
5. Where does Andrew go to find something funny to watch for a good laugh?

### Prompts for writing or speaking

1. Describe three activities that help improve your mood when you are feeling stressed or down. Explain why each activity is effective for you.
2. Discuss your views on running or any form of exercise as a method of stress relief and mood improvement. Do you agree with Andrew's perspective on running as a kind of moving meditation?
3. Have you ever experienced feeling 'hangry' – irritable or upset because of hunger? Share a personal experience and how you dealt with it. Do you think eating certain types of food can affect your mood?
4. How important is sunlight to your daily well-being?
5. Reflect on a time when watching something funny significantly boosted your mood. Why do you think laughter is such an effective mood booster?

**Comprehension question answers**

- 1. What physical activity does Andrew do to lift his mood?**

*Andrew goes running to lift his mood.*

- 2. When Andrew feels tired or overwhelmed, what short activity does he do?**

*Andrew takes a 10 to 15 minute nap at his desk when he feels tired or overwhelmed.*

- 3. What does Andrew usually eat as a snack when he's feeling down or irritable?**

*Andrew eats a banana or sometimes two bananas as a snack when he's feeling down or irritable.*

- 4. What does Andrew do to boost his mood, involving sunlight?**

*Andrew steps outside to soak up some sunshine as a mood booster.*

- 5. Where does Andrew go to find something funny to watch for a good laugh?**

*Andrew watches funny video clips on YouTube for a good laugh.*