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BEATING THE BLUES

With Santa gone and the decorations down, Warsaw's not the happiest place. The *Insider* talks to three experts who can help fix body, mind and soul.

BY DAVID INGHAM & ALEX WEBBER

Magdalena Jastrzębska

(Nutritionist, www.coio.pl)

WI: Most people will be carrying a bit of extra timber after Christmas, what's the best way to get shot of it?

MJ: I definitely wouldn't recommend using any so-called miracle diets because they can actually do more harm than good. It's important to eat regularly, five times a day, and our daily menu should consist of lots of vegetables and legumes (beans, lentils, nuts etc.), which are low in calories and a good source of protein and dietary fiber. Our diet should also be varied with whole grains, fish and dairy products. And stay away from fast-foods, sweets, snacks, and fried dishes!

WI: What food should we avoid to look tasty naked?

MJ: You should avoid foods which are high in fat and sugar but also try to avoid sugary drinks like juices, carbonated soft drinks, and alcohol. These are high in calories and can lead to fat in places where you really don't want it.

WI: In the UK Santa always has a mince pie and a glass of sherry at every house – surely that's not a good idea, no matter how much energy you need?

MJ: Unfortunately, traditional foods are not always healthy – as we can see from Santa's belly! Instead, I would suggest he tries a solid lunch consisting of soup and a main course with foods high in protein, such as fish, as well as nutritious sources of carbohydrates like porridge and salad with olive oil. For a snack or dessert he should eat fruit, which is also a good source of energy. Instead of a glass of sherry I suggest a lighter red wine, which contains valuable antioxidants. But drink in moderation!

WI: January is depressing – what type of foods do people need to eat to banish the winter blues?

It's important to have a balanced diet that provides the entire body with all the essential nutrients. We shouldn't forget about foods that support the functioning of our

Bradley Ernstzen
Personal Fitness Trainer



brain such as grains and nuts, which are a source of good fats and minerals. Remember to eat sea fish, which are a source of omega-3 fatty acids, as they're important for our nervous systems. Vegetables, fruits, and whole grain products also provide us with vitamins and minerals that affect the regulation of hormones which can affect our mental health. We should also avoid alcohol, which only temporarily improves our mood.

Mikołaj Czyż

(Psychotherapist, www.therapywarsaw.com)

WI: What does a psychotherapist do, don't you just look after mad people?

MC: Psychotherapy involves helping people achieve a better sense of well-being, and providing sustainable solutions to their struggles and conflicts. It's not limited to treating mental disorders, it's applied to areas such as relational difficulties and work-related challenges as well.

WI: What issues do people come to you with?

MC: The issues vary widely... but beneath most of them there is a yearning for a fuller life, and for a better relationship with oneself. In particular, people deal with conflicts, self-criticism, addictive tendencies, sexual difficulties, anxieties, extreme experiences from the past or present, and depression.

WI: January can be a difficult time of year. What's your advice for people who are feeling down?

MC: There are a great many reasons to feel down in January and sometimes you need more than you a mug of hot chocolate to cheer you up. My advice would be to experiment with what this "down" feeling actually is. What does this calendar cycle bring up? Even though a lot of people tend to agree that this time of year is less favorable, the exact experience of feeling "down" is often very personal and meaningful.



Mikolaj Czyż
Psychotherapist



Magdalena Jastrzębska
Nutritionist

WI: Is it more common that people seek help at the start of a new year?

MC: I haven't really noticed this kind of regularity. The commitments emerging out of "new beginnings" alone don't seem to be enough to make a lasting change. With important issues such as addiction it isn't really possible to erase the past and just start fresh on January 1st. You need to acknowledge the importance of your past experiences in order to deal with the problem in a sustainable way.

WI: You also work with couples who might be having relationship problems. How does it work?

MC: Myself and Agnieszka Serafin work with couples. A lot of them have reached a limit in what they can do as individuals in their relationship. They either get stuck in a rut or run in circles, with similar recurring unsolved challenges or chronic conflicts, which can obviously be very frustrating and hurtful. Having more understanding of what is really going on, about the actual feelings and needs, is the start... For many couples psychotherapy is a novel approach which can transform their seemingly fixed situation or repetitive patterns, and improve their life.

Bradley Ernstzen

(Personal fitness trainer, bernstzen@gmail.com)

WI: Personal training – explain the concept...

BE: My specialty is home based training: I go round to my client's home and train them there. On our first meeting I do a fitness assessment and PARQ questionnaire. This is the fitness industry standard to ascertain if there are any issues that the trainer has to be aware of, as well as determining your goals. Based on the responses I'm able to design your fitness program. I would then put you through a light workout to determine your fitness and flexibility level. Our first session is also where we work out if we're compatible. It may sound harsh, but I only work with clients who are committed to achieving their goals.

This ensures that our time is not wasted.

WI: Isn't a personal trainer something Lady Gaga has?

BE: Many people still view personal training as something for the stars – it's not. A good personal trainer will guide, motivate, encourage you and design a workout program to bring the best out of you in the shortest possible time. Going to the gym is ok but statistics show that after 3-6 months close to 60% of all members stop going! Having a trainer brings in a level of commitment that is not there if you go to the gym yourself. One drawback of gym membership is that you still have to go to the gym. With my clients time is extremely valuable so having Warsaw's #1 rated in-home trainer arrive at their door adds value to their day. No travelling required, no gym membership required. And no excuses for not turning up, as I will be there on your doorstep!

WI: What sort of exercises will you have me doing?

BE: I'll reintroduce you to the perfect gym you've had with you all your life: your own body! This is my training specialty – bodyweight exercises. On last count I probably had about 150+ bodyweight exercises plus variations. However, I won't simply get you doing all these and there will always be a progression of the exercises throughout your workout program. You have the complete gym and it is my job to show you how to use it correctly, efficiently and, most importantly, safely!

WI: It's freezing cold and I really don't feel like training

BE: This is where we separate the good, the bad and the ugly trainers. A great one will not let this happen. He or she will continuously motivate, encourage and support you throughout your program. That is why I do what I do. I bring light to my clients on a cold, gloomy morning. I bring the smile and the motivation when they have had a hard day. I am there to cheer them up and show them that they are stronger, better and that there is light at the end of the tunnel.