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## Surviving the post-vacation blues

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Even if you were able to take that great dream [vacation](#) — say, a month at a quaint villa in Tuscany — the weak economy may have hampered the fun.

Take Jennifer Hudson, who works for a health services firm. She had to plan a shorter trip to Europe because of the weak dollar.

"So coming back, I had the combo of jet lag, going back to work immediately upon arrival and remorse over not getting to stay longer and enjoy it, like Europeans do," she says.

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### Coming back refreshed

There's also the possibility that you hate your job and need to find a new one. But for those of you who are just a bit bummed out when it comes time to unpack the valise, there are ways to get back to normal after the scent of sea air has dissipated:

- **Throw a party.** "I would suggest that offices have post-vacation office parties that allow people to show photos from their vacations and talk about their vacations, and thus bring some of their vacation spirit back to work with them," advises Virginia Commonwealth's Humphrey. "For example, if some of the people went at [beach](#) locations, they could have beach parties, with beach blankets, etc. More importantly, if companies use good motivational principles throughout the year, then employees shouldn't feel too blue about coming back to work."
- **Step away from the e-mail.** You know your e-mail inbox is going to be overflowing, so take time before you jump in, recommends workplace [communications](#) trainer Laurent Duperval. "Most people receive too much e-mail every day, and if the first thing you see upon your return is that you have 328 e-mails waiting, that's a good recipe for the blues," he says.
- **Pamper yourself.** "Schedule a meal at a fabulous restaurant for

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### WHAT YOU'RE SAYING

People are people. Listen, if you are catering to these 'Gen Y' folks you are just part of the problem. These kids are already walking around like ... they are owed something.

— Posted by Mystic Hippie

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when you return. Ditto for a spa, concert or whatever else turns you on," says Adrian Miller, a sales training expert.

- **Get a jump on work.** While it might sound counterintuitive, "some people find it helpful to go into the office early on their first day back, or even on the night before their first day back, in order to clear out their inbox," says Joseph Weiner, chief of consultation psychiatry at North Shore University Hospital.
- **Bring a bit of sand to the office.** Photos of your vacation or souvenirs are a great way to relive the fun you had. "Good feelings aren't over because vacation has ended. You can conjure up a good memory anytime you like," notes Debbie Mandel, author of the upcoming book, "Addicted to Stress: A Woman's 7-Step Program to Reclaim Joy and Spontaneity in Life."

It's all about not letting the negativity play you like a puppet, says Puff, the psychologist. "If you're aware of the negativity, you can go against it and make your job more enjoyable," he maintains.

Happy Labor Day! Or I should say, find ways to stay happy on the day after Labor Day!

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