

OVERCOMING DEPRESSION

Most of us were taught, as children, how to tie our shoes and ride a bike and blow our nose or read a book. But we weren't taught the intricacies of managing our emotions. It's not too late to learn how to manage your emotions competently.

We come to know ourselves well only after we've brushed up against a lot of adversity. Rather than being threatened by depression, see it as a springboard to personal growth and self- understanding.

Feeling down is a natural reaction to life's hurts, stresses, changes, and disappointments. The road to taking action and feeling well again begins with self- awareness, understanding depression and realizing just where you are.

Information is your best weapon against depression. Learn all you can about its causes, types & treatments.

Because depression frequently has physical causes and effects, to really 'cheer up' or 'snap out of it' often requires medical assistance. Turn to the experts who can help you treat it and defeat it.

Most of life is neither perfect nor terrible , totally black nor totally white. Expect constant change in your life, and occasional chaos. expect that life, while not fair, can still be good.

Depression is an illness of the body, mind, and spirit. To treat it, you must pay attention to all of you. Where are you hurting? Ask yourself how you can bring healing to that part of your life.

Experts tell us that we act and react according to preset tapes in our head using thinking and behaving patterns acquired in childhood. But since these patterns are learned, they can be unlearned. Start giving yours new, positive, and affirming messages.

Don't let your life be too full of musts, shoulds, and have- to's. You do have choices. Let your values and priorities shape your daily life.

Feeling helpless or trapped is one of the main reasons people get depressed. Be sure to Spend as much time thinking about positive solutions as you do thinking about how helpless you feel.

Feelings of hopelessness can come from feeling overwhelmed, as if you're buried under an avalanche. You can't push all the rubble away at once. You need to remove the rocks one at a time. (And maybe with the help of someone else.)

Put "Have fun" on your "To do," list. Sure fun is mostly spontaneous, but some of it has to be planned.

Sometimes we get into the habit of awful- izing-., it's okay to ask yourself. 'What's the worst thing that could happen?'" But be sure to balance this with: what's the best thing that could happen?"

When a too- heavy burden flattens your wheels, you may think you have no options. But in reality there are many: remove some weight, put more air in your tires, get help, delay your delivery, get some rest and see things from a new perspective.

It's okay to be you. As a matter of fact, being you is the only person you will be good at being. cherish the "you that God created. Believe in yourself, recognize your own worth. Joy and peace grow out of feeling competent and confident.

Children, know a simple secret about joy: it's the little things that are the big things. observe children at work and play and, like them, look for everyday small ways to have fun.

Picture yourself as a happy person, filled with grace and love. Regardless of who You are; or what you have or haven't done, you can work at being a calm and gentle spirit living in inner peace.

Nature carries a basketful of pick-me-ups. Smell, taste, touch its contents regularly.

Listen to the voice deepest within you. That's your heart speaking. Your heart knows it's love that matters most and love that brings peace and hope.

Exercise- movement in general -can give, you a new perspective on things. At the very least you will have a physical outlet for bottled- up anxieties ... and you will generally sleep and rest better.

If you feel like you need a miracle in your life, you probably do. Ask for one. But remember that miracles can be small. Sometimes you just need to notice the ones God has put right in front of you.

Don't underestimate the power of creativity to lift you out of the fog. Sing a song, bake a cake, paint a picture, compose a poem, build something.

Look toward the future especially during the holidays; when people are often busy trying to recapture that perfect past of the good old days. Better yet, take satisfaction in who you are, where you are, what you are doing right now!

When something looks good, sounds good, feels good, tastes good, smells good .. say- so. it's a happy habit to have. Counting your blessings is good therapy.

Get the spotlight off Yourself by shining it onto someone or something else: a hobby or craft, a garden or pet, a neighbor or relative, a needy person or project.

Sometimes You can't climb up from depression all by yourself. There are people who are glad to throw you a rope, give you a needed boost, pick you up and carry you to a better place. Let them.

Don't let pride keep you from, reaching out to your neighbor, your church, your spouse, your teacher, your friend, your doctor, your God. A big part of depression is feeling so alone. Accept the help and encouragement others can give you.

You may feel that no one could possibly understand what you are going through right now. You're probably right. But others can still help. Ask for what you need. You'll be surprised how often you get it.

Depression is highly treatable. Physicians and therapists can help you to get the insights, Coping skills, or medication you need to overcome it. If your depression is severe or persistent, turn to an expert and together work out a plan to get well again.

If at times you can't seem to ask for help, Look for expressions of kindness anyway: a pat on the back, knowing smile or grin or glance during a tough time. Notice these gentle gestures. They are intended for you and can shore you up.

Listen to the wisdom of the wounded. Their pain may no longer be as intense as yours, but the perspective they bring can lessen your feelings of hopelessness and despair.

Let God into your life. With God along, you can bear the unbearable. And even life's best things get better.

Friendship doubles our joy and divides our grief. Find someone- or Someone- to share your deepest feelings and worries with.

Don't get discouraged. You don't feel better immediately. You may be improving even though you don't yet feel it. The main thing is to continue to take steps toward healing and to reject negative thinking.

God has promised us peace and fullness of life. We can help God help us to climb up from depression by accepting as our motto: "Treat it and defeat it"

While you may think it's raining on you, it's quite possibly just raining. Look at the bigger picture, and be open to adjusting your attitude if need be.

Don't buy into the self- defeating myth that if only your faith were stronger you would be exempt from depression. God and religion don't work that way. Remind yourself that God loves you; but you are human and you live in an imperfect world.

If you're always pushing toward greater success, achievement, control, perfection, and efficiency, you're overrating greatness- as well as your own human capacities. You're great because of who you are, not because of what you can do.