

Disability Campaign.org

Strategies to Help Fight Depression

“Depression may be described as feeling sad, blue, unhappy, miserable, or down in the dumps. Most of us feel this way at one time or another for short periods. True clinical depression is a mood disorder in which feelings of sadness, loss, anger, or frustration interfere with everyday life for weeks or longer.”¹

If you are struggling with depression, know that you are not alone and that there is hope. While you wait for the depression to lift, here are some strategies that you can put into practice:

1. **Understand that the solution is not found in telling yourself to “suck it up” or “get over it,”** nor is it found in your family and friends telling you to do the same. The first step in dealing with depression is to acknowledge your battle with it. Begin to unpack the actions, feelings, and motivations behind the depression.
2. **Be honest and talk about it.** Talk with a good friend, family member, or your doctor. A true friend will love you at all times.
3. **Identify activities that relax you** such as music, art, or exercise, and plan ahead for them in your schedule.



¹ “Major depression,” PubMed Health, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001941/> (accessed October 19, 2012).



4. **Eat healthy food, exercise regularly, and maintain a good sleep schedule.** Do your best to control these physiological variables in your life. Your body and mind will thank you. Certain types of food, such as fast food, can “feed” the depression and you may want to seek help from a nutritionist for healthy eating choices.

5. **Maintain a daily routine.** Make a physical list of the tasks that you need to do and cross each one off as you finish them. A visual record of your accomplished tasks can be a powerful motivator to continue pressing on.

6. **Seek professional help.** Clinical depression is a mental disorder that if gone untreated can have compounding negative effects in your relationships, physical health, and work/school performance.

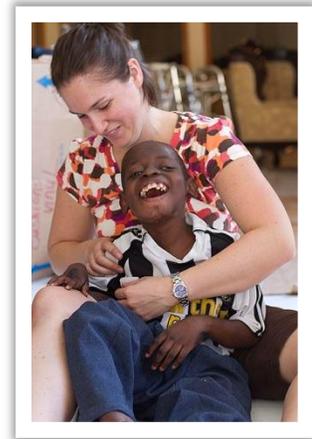
7. **Log your moods and emotions in a journal or calendar.** You may even want to make note of your meals, exercise, stress, and sleep patterns. This can help you and/or your doctor track patterns in your life.



8. **Do not isolate yourself.** Connect with family and friends regularly, find social groups with your same interests, or find a place to volunteer. If transportation is not readily available, consider joining an online support group. Many people are willing to help, so kindly ask a friend or neighbor if they might assist with transportation to and from activities.

9. **Serve others.** Depression takes you in a downward spiral of emotions and of self-focus. Choose to put your focus outside of yourself every day and serve someone else to make his/her day brighter.

10. **Be thankful.** Before you get out of bed or even during your commute to work, make it a habit to say aloud to yourself ten things for which you are thankful. Keep a “gratitude journal” and jot down at the end of the day at least one thing or person for which you are thankful.



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