

THE TOP 10 WAYS TO CONQUER DEPRESSION

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STEP BY STEP SOLUTIONS

You Can Get Better

Depression is painful and debilitating. It is a disease, and like any disease, it can be treated and improved if you put in the work and time to find the right treatment for you. This process takes time, trial and error, and motivation. But if you commit to the process, you can get better. Here are the top 10 ways to conquer depression.

1. HOPE AND A COMMITMENT TO WORK HARD.

I tell my clients that treating depression is like having a part-time job. You need to own that it may take many hours over a long period of time to get better. And commit to put in the work. The worst part of depression is the hopelessness. But it is a lie. There are many treatments available and a variety of ways people can heal from depression. Challenging the hopelessness and believing there is hope of getting better is crucial in combination with a commitment to work hard at finding the right treatment.

2. CONNECTION AND VULNERABILITY.

Having a support team is essential to getting better. People who are depressed isolate themselves and often aren't sharing their feelings with others. Choose carefully, but you must have a few people who know the struggle you are dealing with and can help you as you navigate how to get better.

3. GO TO THERAPY.

Depression enhances negative thinking and behavior. It can be difficult for friends and family to help you in the way that you need emotionally. Just as you would trust a doctor to do surgery because they have the experience and training, you need to find a therapist

you trust to help you heal from past wounds and re-train your brain with positive thoughts and behaviors.

4. NATURAL TREATMENTS OR MEDICATION?

If your depression is mild to moderate, meaning you are still able to function daily at home or work, start with natural treatments. You can see a naturopath to get support. If your depression doesn't get better with natural treatments, you may want to consider seeing a psychiatrist for medication. Obviously, nobody wants to take medication if they don't have to, but in certain situations, people need medication to get better. If your depression is severe and you are unable to function or have thoughts of suicide, natural treatments may not be effective and medication might be necessary.

5. JOURNALING.

Get to know your triggers. Healing is a process of self-discovery. Evaluate all your relationships. Often there are conflicts and unresolved issues in relationships that are contributing to depression. Include in your journaling daily the changes in your mood throughout the day and thoughts/ behaviors that are happening when your mood changes (good or bad). Write out things you have accomplished that day and things you are grateful for to reinforce the good.

6. BUILD DAILY HABITS TO IMPROVE YOUR MOOD.

What are the ways you take care of yourself that help your depression? Make a list and create daily habits that improve your well being. It may mean starting your day with prayer, meditation, journaling and/or exercise. Preparing healthy foods, building in times to connect with people, and taking time to rest might be helpful habits that will help you feel better. Start with one habit at a time and start small (even 5 minutes a day) to feel like you are doing something active to help your depression.

7. MINDFULNESS.

The practice of mindfulness is the moment by moment awareness of our experience without judgment. People with depression are famous for judging themselves constantly. When we learn to observe our thoughts and feelings without judgment, they are able to pass and teach us what we are meant to learn from them. It also reduces rumination, decreases stress and helps us regulate our emotions in healthier ways.

8. EXERCISE/NUTRITION.

Studies show that exercise can boost mild to moderate depression as effectively as antidepressant medication. It releases endorphins and changes the brain in ways that improve mood. Many people don't evaluate and acknowledge the role of food in depression. Research shows that fruit and vegetables improve mood, while sugar and high carbohydrates can contribute to depression. You may want to see a nutritionist to get a personalized plan for you to improve your diet as a treatment for your depression. Food is medicine.

9. EMPOWER YOURSELF.

The 'Me Too' movement has brought to light that women still have a long way to go with regards to equality and empowerment. Explore any areas in relationships that consist of physical, emotional or sexual abuse and codependency. Many women stuff their anger which leads to anger towards themselves and shows up as depression. Recognize and stop mistreatment and address any trauma that has impacted you.

10. WORK/HOBBIES/GOALS.

Without a sense of purpose and contribution in the world, people get depressed. Evaluate your work and determine whether it feeds you or drains you. Enhance and spend time cultivating hobbies and things you enjoy. Set goals for yourself so you can look into the future and begin taking steps towards something that matters to

you. This can increase those feelings of hope which decreases feelings of depression.

My email newsletter will give you other tips and tricks to conquer depression. It is a journey that is challenging but well worth the effort required to get better. You will begin to heal parts of you that need to get healthier in order for you to have an abundant and satisfying life with great relationships. If you can see depression as a gift in that it stops you from functioning so that you can re-evaluate your life and make changes that will grow and develop you as a person, you will be on your way to creating meaning out of this painful season.