Tools, Tips, and Coping Techniques to Combat Depression

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Tools to Defeat Depression

Depression is pervasive. Given the opportunity, it will damage your mood, energy and motivation. It will worsen your sleep, your appetite, your interest in doing things and your self-esteem. Your self-esteem is a crucial aspect of your mood and yourself as a person. It is something that must be guarded to avoid psychological harm. Let us show you how you can defeat depression.

Some think that self-esteem will improve by itself over time. This is usually not the case. You benefit more from being active, preventing and taking logical steps to improve your self-worth.

Mood Boosters

- **Write it down.** You may have forgotten your strengths. Make a list. Seeing your positive attributes in black and white makes them more tangible and more impactful on your perception. What do you like about yourself? What are you good at? If you are stumped after 3 or 4 responses, ask trusted people in your life. Odds are that they can see more positives in you than you can see in yourself. Trust their perspective and accept the compliment. This list will not be complete until there are 30 to 40 positives included. At times it will be uncomfortable because self-esteem is a muscle that has not been used much lately.
- **Edit the list.** Your list is 37 items long. Nice work! Now go back and check the language. People with lower self-esteem tend to use qualifiers when they speak about themselves. Look for words like ‘sometimes’, ‘kind of’, ‘sort of’, ‘usually’, ‘can be’, and ‘maybe’. These qualifiers serve to diminish the desired benefit. Use “I” statements. Saying “I’m a great listener” is very different from saying, “People say that sometimes I’m easy to talk to.”
- **Believe it.** Why are people more comfortable believing a lie that makes them feel worse than the truth that makes them feel good? This is a tough question but one worth asking. Every time you put yourself down or speak negatively about yourself, you are perpetuating the lie that depression tells you. Depression wants you to be more depressed. Do not believe the lie. Believe the truth: You are better than you know.

- **Use repetition.** Your negative self-talk is continuous when your self-worth is low. To combat this, you need to match and surpass the negatives with positives. Make copies of your list and post them throughout your house. Put them by the TV, in the bathroom and on the refrigerator. Schedule time during the day and set reminders on your phone to think positively about yourself.
- **Say it aloud.** Writing it down makes it real and hearing the words come from your mouth takes it to another level. March yourself into the bathroom, look in the mirror and list some to yourself. Start with one or two to get used to the experience and then expand and add more. Practice in front of your friends. You may be worried about being seen as arrogant or cocky but your friends will not see it that way. They will be so pleased to see your esteem climbing because they benefit from you being a happier person.

Conclusion

Even if you have fallen out of practice speaking positively about yourself, like any other skill, a few weeks of practice will get you feeling better. Follow the techniques above to reverse the inertia of negatives. You will be feeling positive in no time.