11 Different Ways to Deal With Depression

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How to Deal With Depression

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How we deal with the challenges life throws our way makes us who we are as individuals. This is where our real strength is born and where our character lies. Depression is not something you can describe with any accuracy because as you may know, the experience and feeling is beyond words. When it comes to knowing how to deal with depression, that is its own unique experience too.

There are hundreds of ways regarding how to deal with depression, with each strategy and technique working for some and not for others. What's great about a lot of physical illnesses is that the treatment is relatively straightforward and works for everyone (a cast for a broken leg, cough medicine for a cold). However, depression treatment has varying degrees of effectiveness, depending on the individual.

Helping Yourself Cope With Depression

Depression is much more than just feeling sad, so be gentle with yourself when you are unable to shake those negative feelings right away. It can take time and patience to begin to feel happy again, and that is okay.

Everyone copes in different ways, using different techniques. The first step in discovering what works for you is to learn what your depression is like.

Discover Your Depression Triggers

Is there anything in particular that triggers a depressive episode for you? If you are not sure, pay close attention to the events that led up to it next time.

It's also helpful to keep a journal in order to track your thoughts, behaviors, feelings and emotions on a daily basis. Recount the events of the day, especially if there was something that bothered you.

Keeping a journal will give you a timeline from which to understand your depression better and what thoughts or feelings are associated with your lowest points.

By learning what might get you down, you can recognize certain triggers as they appear and deal with those negative thoughts and feelings sooner before they take control.

Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle

It might sound obvious to some, but staying physically healthy is pivotal to your mental health. Do you get enough sleep each night? Do you drink eight glasses of water and eat three meals a day?

Even small changes can make a drastic difference if you are not maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It's unreasonable to expect to feel happy if you suffer from poor sleeping habits and your body is deprived of the vitamins and minerals that it needs to survive.

Make a conscious effort to drink water throughout the day, eat your fruits and veggies, avoid too much junk food, and get to bed at a decent hour each night. Once this becomes routine, you will be surprised how much easier it will become.

Access Self-Help Resources

There are plenty of self-help resources out there for you to check out. Whether you are interested in reading a book to understand depression, completing a depression workbook, or attending a group therapy class, there are many avenues that you can take to learn more.

Most local self-help programs are free, as they are run by volunteers, many of which are living with mental illness themselves. You have nothing to lose in stopping by and learning more about their offerings.

There are many group therapy options that allow participants to learn the basics of cognitive behavioral therapy, or CBT, without the expense of one-on-one therapy. Opening up to a group can be scary, but once you come to realize that you are surrounded by a group of your peers who support you, group therapy can be very successful.

Coping With Depression in a Relationship

If you have depression and are also in a relationship, it can be more difficult to focus your attention on yourself and your own mental health. Be sure to remind yourself that you cannot show your partner love or be mentally present in your relationship without maintaining your overall health. There are many things that you can do together to strengthen your relationship, while also coping with your depression.

Learn a New Skill

Keep your mind active and engaged by learning something new together. Have you or your partner ever made your own pottery? Does your cooking leave something to be desired?

There are many classes and workshops that you can access, simply by checking your community's activity guide or doing a bit of online research. Trying something new is a fun way to spend more time with your partner, while the mental stimulation will keep those feelings of depression at bay.

Next page: Five additional ways to deal with your depression.

Test Your Comfort Zone

Don't be afraid of a little adventure in your life! It does not have to be anything too intense, but make it something that is challenging for you.

Does the thought of camping in the woods with no electricity a little scary? You may be surprised how close you and your partner may become, simply from building a tent and spending a weekend together without distractions.

Try new foods, travel and do not hold back. Keep your relationship interesting and your mind will thank you.

Dynamic Meditation

You may be thinking "I've tried meditation and it doesn't work". Well, this is no ordinary meditation where you sit still and focus on your breathing. This involves shaking, vibrating and moving the body, expressing all trapped

emotions that are being compressed in mind.

If we think of our experiences with depression, it manifests itself in the body quite noticeably. Our shoulders turn inward, our posture suffers, our eyes become sensitive to light, etc. By opening up our body with dynamic meditation and express ourselves, we relieve this tension within our bodies and in turn, our minds.

Spend Time Outdoors

It’s difficult to find some good nature since most of us live in a city, however, a short drive or bus ride and you can be surrounded by trees. Even your local city part can provide relief from concrete and our man-made complexities.

There have been studies that suggest going to for a nature walk reduces stress and helps us feel more present and grateful – even some therapists invite their clients to "walk and talk" in parks to encourage them to relax and open themselves up more freely.

A theory for the rise in rates of depression is the fact that our lifestyle is so contrary to how we have lived for thousands of years. We evolved in tribes; exercising and being immersed in nature was a given.

Today we are disconnected from the natural world, are indoors more and tend to look at our screens more than another human being (just like you are doing right now).

A simple forest walk can help you deal with depression in two ways:

1. We know exercise helps with depression, so this forest walk is a perfect way to move your body and get the blood flowing.
2. You are disconnected from the world and brought back to your ancestral roots. No phones, computers, television, politics, cars or concrete. Just do your best to recognize the beauty no matter how deep the feeling of depression becomes. There is a simple beauty in the forest and take your mind back to a simpler time, in nature.

Try Talk Therapy for Depression

This can mean speaking with a therapist or merely talking to a friend, family member, online friend or anyone you can trust. Talking to someone goes back to the term "expression" because we are no longer holding in our thoughts and emotional baggage.

Talking about how we are feeling takes energy, and there are times we just may not have that motivation, and that is okay. When you feel the time is right and are ready to open up, please realize that just by telling someone how you feel can make an enormous difference in your mood.

Loneliness is a tremendous feeling with depression, and once someone else knows how you feel, you no longer are entirely alone in the battle. The person you trust can hold onto some of that baggage, which will make you feel just light enough to get through another day.

Listen to Music

It’s difficult if not impossible to find someone who does not like music. You can play the guitar, drums or bass when you are feeling depressed, and just by creating something that maybe cannot be expressed with words, you will feel better!

If you cannot play an instrument, we have music we can listen to! Is there a particular genre of music that makes you feel good or helps you relax? Maybe there is a song that “pumps you up” and gets you motivated to take that first step out of bed. Music can even remind you of something or someone that makes you smile and for a moment, relieving you from the burden you may be holding.

We encourage you to find that beautiful song that fills your soul and helps you realize that happiness and beauty will come again.

These are only a few things that can help you deal with depression, but there are many more you can discover on *NewLifeOutlook* as well. It’s all about finding what works for us and filling our mental health toolbox, so we have the right tool to fix the challenges we face in our lives.