

DEALING WITH DEPRESSION



Depression drains your energy, hope, and drive, making it difficult to do what you need to feel better. But while overcoming depression isn't quick or easy, it's far from impossible. You can't just will yourself to "snap out of it," but you do have more control than you realize — even if your depression is severe and stubbornly persistent. The key is to start small and build from there. Feeling better takes time, but you can get there if you make positive choices each day.

Be patient with yourself and celebrate each and every accomplishment. The steps may seem small, but they'll quickly add up. If you continue to take positive steps day by day, you'll soon find yourself feeling better.

5 tips for dealing with depression

1. Stay connected
2. Get moving
3. Do things that make you feel good
4. Eat a healthy, mood-boosting diet
5. Challenge negative thinking

When you're depressed, the tendency is to withdraw and isolate. Even reaching out to close family members and friends can be tough. Compound that with the feelings of shame and the guilt you may feel at neglecting your relationships.

But social support is essential to depression recovery. Staying connected to other people and the outside world will make a world of difference in your mood and outlook. And if you don't feel that you have anyone to turn to, it's never too late to build new friendships and improve your support network.

Look for support from people who make you feel safe and cared for.

The person you talk to doesn't have to "fix" you, they just need to be a good listener — someone who'll listen attentively and compassionately, without being distracted or judging you.

Make face-time a priority.

Phone calls, social media, and texting are great ways to stay in touch, but they don't replace good old-fashioned in-person quality time. The simple act of talking to

someone face to face about how you feel can play a big role in lifting the fog of depression and keeping it away.

Keep up with social activity, even if you don't want to.

When you're depressed, it often feels more comfortable to retreat into your shell, but being around other people will make you feel less depressed.

Find ways to support others.

It's nice to receive support, but research shows you get an even bigger mood boost from providing support yourself. So, find ways, both big and small, to help others: volunteer, be a listening ear for a friend, do something nice for someone.

Depression can lead to suicidal thoughts.

Many people, at some time in their life, think about suicide. Most decide against it because they eventually come to realize that the crisis is temporary and death is permanent. On the other hand, people having a crisis sometimes perceive their dilemma as inescapable and feel an utter loss of control.

The best way to prevent suicide is to be aware of the common warning signs. Be aware of the first indications of trouble and begin thinking about getting help. Here are some signs:

- Talking about wanting to die
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless
- Talking about feeling trapped or in pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Giving away treasure personal possessions

This brochure is distributed by the RU?OK Task Force.

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