

CRACK THE DEPRESSION CODE:



7 PROVEN HACKS TO...
TAKE BACK YOUR LIFE
BRYAN T. FORSYTHE

CRACK THE DEPRESSION CODE:



**7 Proven Life Hacks to STOP the
Depressive cycle,
Take back YOUR life,
Release the PAIN**

Start Living Again.

By:

BRYAN T. FORSYTHE

Hi! As a Special thank you...
[Click here to download a
FREE copy of the *Crack
the Depression Code*
audiobook.](#)

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OVERVIEW

This book has the 7 life hacks to help you crack the depression cycle, and allow you to get back to living your best life.

But inside you'll also..

**Discover whether you are depressed or just sad (Take the Quiz)

****Answer the question, “Is Depression an actual illness?” (It is!)**

****Learn the major symptoms of dysthymia and why it’s often worse than Major Depressive Disorder.**

****Learn the triggers which can send you into a depressive state.**

****PLUS****

Find out about the latest non-prescription treatment options.

PLUS PLUS You’ll know how to tell what symptoms make it an **ABSOLUTE** necessity to see your medical professional.

And of course you get my 7 depression hacks enabling you to break the depressive cycle, take your life back, and start **LIVING** again.

Thank you for committing. Now. Let’s **GO!!!**

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“Death was now a daily presence, blowing over me in cold gusts.”

— William Styron

OFFICIAL DISCLAIMER

To begin with I'm not a doctor, nor do I play one on TV. Though most of this content has been obtained, or is based on, personal painful experience, at all times YOU must listen to you. All information found within this document except where otherwise noted, is not to be construed as medical advice.



FORWARD

Hello my Name is Bryan Forsythe, and official disclaimer's aside, I'm intimately familiar with what you may be going through. Debilitating panic attacks? Life changing depression? Mania? Yep. For sure. Though I'm not positive when I officially started feeling, "not quite right", after dealing with this illness for 30 years, I truly want to help.

See like many I ignored all the warning signs and it nearly killed me. So, after having a near suicidal breakdown,

I decided the right thing to do was to share my knowledge, and all the techniques which have (and continue to) work for me.

But you say..

Can this book REALLY help you crack YOUR depressive cycle, enabling you to start living and loving again??

YES!!. After years of working through every depressive phase, from the run of the mill kinda down days, to the I don't even want to pet my dog gloom, I've been through it all. I say with your PERSISTENCE and COMMITMENT, relief is completely possible.

It is my sincere desire that this book will enable you to break the depressive cycle, and get back to, or start doing the things, you are passionate about.

So...



WHERE ARE YOU NOW??

In this book we are going to go on a bit of a journey. However, when you are depressed or in an altered mental state, all your inputs (good or bad) tend to get filtered. This makes it difficult to recognize and assimilate events accurately. Thus it's important to recognize and gauge your mental state right now. And so..time for a Quiz...

Time to answer the age old question...

How do I know I'm depressed? Maybe I'm just sad?

As you read each statement, grade yourself as of the last 14 days, where 1 is least true and 4 is most true. Though, this is not a medical diagnosis, you'll see where you are on the scale at this moment. Noting your mental state consistently is one of the easiest ways to fight the depressive cycle.

IF your score is above 34, or you mark a 4 on an italicized question, consider contacting your medical provider. IF based on this quiz you have a suspicion you may be suicidal, please call the suicide prevention hotline **RIGHT** now. They literally live to help you get through the tough times.

1. Drastic Change in Appetite.

You normally eat three eggs, cereal, and an apple for breakfast, but lately you've just been skipping eating or don't have preference for what you eat.

2. Sleeping patterns have drastically changed.

Sleep used to be your friend. Lay your head down, you were out! Now, work, your dog, and doomsday scenarios make your once cozy bed feel like the inside of an Iron

Maiden.

Your inner critic won't shut up and the tiniest conflict becomes a nap ruining thought monster. The reverse could be true, I.e., you can't seem to stop worrying so sleep is THE thing you want.

3. You've lost your passion.

Your paintings grace many houses. The music you compose is loved. Now you can't work up interest enough to pick up the brush and stepping into Hobby Lobby seems pointless. What's the use you think, Uncle Ned says your work makes him want to hurt puppies.

4. Your energy level is low.

Just thinking about arm wrestling your chichaua makes you tired.

5. You feel unworthy.

Nothing seems to be going right. You are sure it's you. You feel unworthy of love, or appreciation.

6. You are losing, or have lost, hope.

7. Feeling guilty without reason.

It is totally unlikely the event, problem, or situation was your fault, and still you can't shake the sharp pang that everything is in fact ALL your fault.

8. Indecision.

Your choices (which are normally less than life or death) leave you continually spinning.

9. Melancholia or persistent, and engulfing sadness.

Once you woke up without problem, with plenty of time for your morning, and now, your alarm clock snooze button looks like Kim Kardashians make up mirror. When you finally get up, you are moving SO slow, shuffling along head down, completely beaten. Nothing has happened which would justify this.

10. Unexplained physical aches.

Your stomach, your chest, your legs. You haven't walked more than twelve steps in years, but have unexplained body pain.

11. You are anti-social.

You distance yourself from a happy wonderful family group. Your friends have always been there for you, and you for them. Remember that time?? You know if you hadn't been there to get the cow back in his barn, no one would believe THAT story or any of the others from the last 15 years? Yep, those days used to be normal, you looked forward to them, and now you just don't feel like celebrating life with Fred, or Jim. Not even Sally can get you

off the couch. You know Sally, with the cute ferret sweaters, and all her teeth?

12. Your drinking or risk behavior has increased dramatically.

You were once a one drink a day kinda person, and now are very close the to, “the only thing that helps is to get drunk enough to pass out” stage.

13. *Mentally disturbed describes your thoughts.*

You are totally preoccupied with morbid things, and may even be hallucinating, or hearing voices. For example if you think Jesus is living in your garbage disposal and says you shouldn't wear cotton or eat.

14. *You feel like life is passing you by.*

You are 16 years old and feel like things are BAD, what is the use? Or you are 35 with a great job, nice car, wife, and a dog that loves you, yet your thoughts are consumed with everything done wrong, never done, or wouldn't/couldn't do. In your opinion you are simply watching your life fall apart.

15. *Suicidal.*

This is not just I think about death a little bit, or idly wondering what's, “on the other side”, this is either you have a plan or are close to having a plan to end your life. If

you are at this point, I encourage you to stop reading this and call the suicide prevention helpline. Rest assured they will not judge you, shame or tell on you. The good people who answer these lines are kind, caring, well adjusted, professionals, and they are ready to help. Do not wait. Heck even if you don't think this point is particularly applicable to you, call them just to test the number, or have a chat. They literally live to help.



DEPRESSED OR REALLY DEPRESSED?

You might be surprised to know that 20 million American adults every year are diagnosed as depressive. 20 Million. This means the feelings and thoughts you may be experiencing are not unusual. All people experience varying degrees and periods of sadness,

and this CAN lead to depression.

The question you might have though, is how depressed am I?

As mentioned previously, I'm not a doctor, but these are common signs of an altered or depressed state.

- *Sadness that is prolonged.*
- *Crying spells that are unexplained.*
- *Significant and abrupt changes in sleep patterns and appetite.*
- *Anger, irritability, anxiety, worry, agitation*
- *Pessimism, indifference*
- *Energy loss*
- *Persistent lethargy*
- *Guilt feelings and unexplained sense of worthlessness*
- *Difficulty in concentrating and indecisiveness*
- *Inability in taking pleasure in interests you previously enjoy*
- *Social withdrawal*

- Unexplained pains and aches
- Extreme fatigue when you have not done much
- Heightened levels of aggression
- Recurring and frequent thoughts of suicide or death

If you have intensely experienced more than five of the previous conditions in the last 14 days, consider going to your doctor. Rather than be in the dark, it's best to get checked out. There are many other illnesses which might cause some of them, thyroid disease is just one.

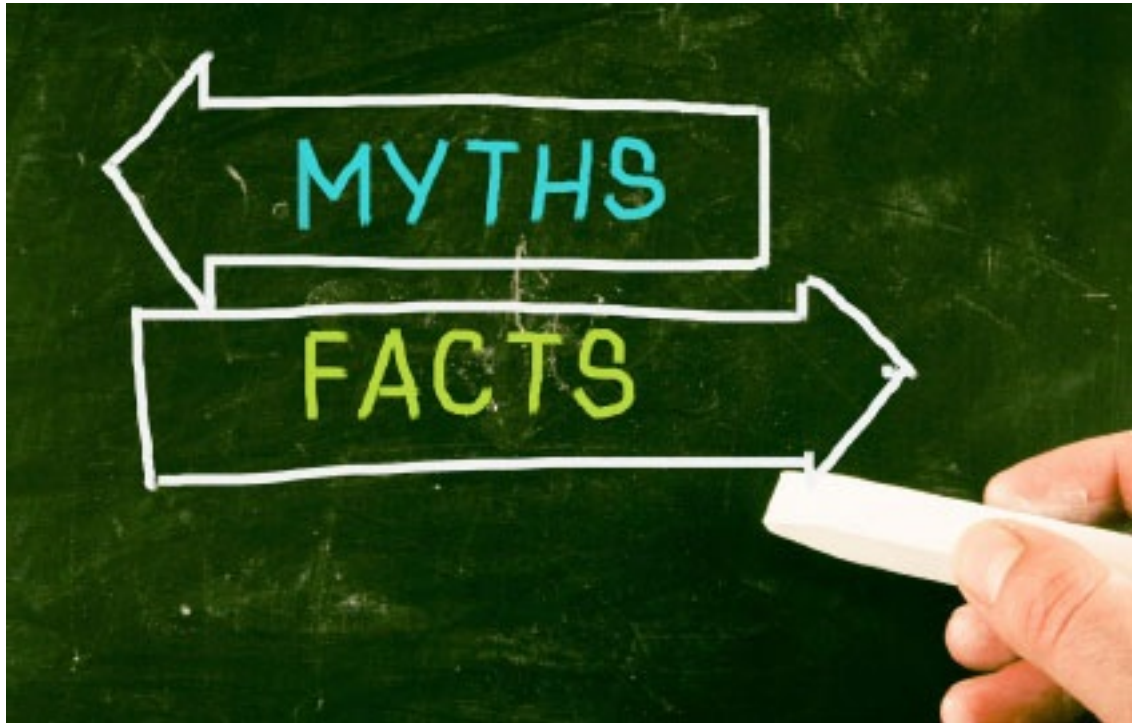
As a responsible motivated adult you should be getting routine checkups anyway, so what's one more visit to Doc Holliday going to hurt?

***If you are reluctant to see a doctor, be warned, diagnosing yourself is like doing your own heart transplant or setting your own broken bone! It's a bad idea. Also consider this. The latest research indicates depression physically alters your brain, shrinking your hippocampus, making it more likely you will have another depressive episode. In fact, recent statistics indicate the illness is increasingly common.

So don't feel embarrassed, shy or stupid for

experiencing depression!

To repeat, if you are suffering from depression, you're not the only one. Clearly.



THE, "SNAP OUT OF IT FALLACY"

After all this time people still question whether depression is a real illness. They may say things like snap out of it. Smile, look at your amazing life, etc. Snap out of it. If you don't know, let me tell you. This has to be the single most damaging thing you can say to someone who is in deep depression. Inside they feel they should be able to do just that. So they keep pushing, pushing themselves, smiling, and pretending. All while battling feeling like a loser, or pariah. While depression can

be so severe you can't get off the floor or out of bed, this situation is thankfully rare. Those who are depressed get to be secret agent level good at keeping it hidden. In many cases, family members, coworkers, and friends are unaware until the situation turns dire. If this is you, however, I urge you to come clean. You may not realize it, but even mild depression could mean you don't eat right, exercise, or self correct for unnecessary personal or financial risks. Some days you may sleep all day, or totally withdraw from everyone and everything you once loved. The fact is, even before it becomes severe depression, the effects can be highly debilitating, literally robbing years and years from your life.

To reiterate, this is not just a sad feeling you can push past. Do not feel weak because you aren't able to snap out of it. I feel like, after all this time, years of research, evidence, and tragedy, the “snap out of it” mindset is also responsible for the low rate of treatment seekers. Cause hear me, like many other illnesses, modern medicine considers depression a treatable illness. There are however a wide range of treatment options for you to carefully consider, which I'll cover later in this book. The most important thing for you to know right now, is, the best step towards success is your personal commitment to do what it takes to take care of you. Whatever the treatment, whether one of 47 different kinds of antidepressant pills, or another

of the many available options, e.g., the right vitamins, supplements, different habits, etc, the strength of your resolve will be key. Do not let this real, potentially debilitating illness win! **Faith, strength, will, resolve. Make these your by words, your continual mantra, and whatever comes, you'll be ten times more able to cope with your day.**



THE 3 MAIN DEPRESSION TYPES PLUS ONE

As we just learned Depression is in fact a real illness and like most other illnesses, it has multiple varieties. Here is a brief summary of the major classes.

Major Depressive Disorder. MDP, can often completely interfere with one's ability to function normally.

This quote from well know author William Styron paints an accurate picture.

Mysteriously and in ways that are totally remote from normal experience, the gray drizzle of horror induced by depression takes on the quality of physical pain... [the] despair, owing to some evil trick played upon the sick brain by the inhabiting psyche, comes to resemble the diabolical discomfort of being imprisoned in a fiercely overheated room."

From his book *Darkness Visible*:

Depression is as Mr. Styron describes, characterized by a prevailing inability to enjoy life, or experience pleasure.

But the following are more specific and unexpected symptoms

- Prolonged sadness or unexplained crying spells
- Significant changes in appetite and sleep patterns
- Irritability, anger, worry, agitation, anxiety
- Pessimism, indifference
- Loss of energy, persistent lethargy

- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness
- Inability to concentrate, indecisiveness
- Inability to take pleasure in former interests, social withdrawal
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide

The symptoms are constant, often ranging from moderate to severe, and can vary in intensity from day to day. Left untreated, major depression typically lasts about **six** months. While some people experience just a single depressive episode in their lifetime, more commonly, major depression is a recurring disorder.

Dysthymia. This is a type of chronic “low-grade” depression. From day to day, you feel mildly or moderately depressed, interspersed with varying degrees and brief periods of normal mood.

While the symptoms of dysthymia are not as strong as the symptoms of major depression, they can last a long time (at least two years).

Chronic symptoms such as these make it very difficult

to live life to the fullest or to remember better times. Sadly some people also experience major depressive episodes on top of dysthymia, a condition known as “double depression.” Suffering from dysthymia, you may feel like you’ve always been depressed. Or you may think that your continuous low mood is “just the way you are. [This life hack will help tremendously](#)”

Bipolar Disorder. The third type, BD involves drastic mood swings, from being on an amazing emotional high one minute to severely depressed the next. This is the condition typically known as manic-depression.

Highs

- Increased physical and mental activity and energy
- Heightened mood, exaggerated optimism and self-confidence
- Excessive irritability, aggressive behavior
- Decreased need for sleep without experiencing fatigue
- Grandiose delusions, inflated sense of self-importance
- Racing speech, racing thoughts, flight of ideas

- Impulsiveness, poor judgment, distractibility
- Reckless behavior
- In the most severe cases, delusions and hallucinations

Lows

- Prolonged sadness or unexplained crying spells
- Significant changes in appetite and sleep patterns
- Irritability, anger, worry, agitation, anxiety
- Pessimism, indifference
- Loss of energy, persistent lethargy
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness
- Inability to concentrate, indecisiveness
- Inability to take pleasure in former interests, social withdrawal
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide

Manic Depression is a terror of cycling mood changes. Imagine bouts of Major depression followed by manic hyperactive episodes in which the individual may make impulsive, ill advised, decisions. While the transition from one extreme to the other is normally gradual, if you are not aware of this cycle, the drop from manic to depressive can be shocking and confusing. The high feels so good but oh, the unforeseen crash! High for a week, or a day, then hurtling along on a downward emotional spiral. I've been there.

Seasonal Affective Disorder. (SAD) is the plus one. It is most commonly associated with winter blues, and afflicts about 5% of Americans. Moving from the sun and fun of Summer to leaves wilting, chill returning, and frost nipping, for some can trigger SAD. Interestingly, according to Alfred Lewy, MD, professor of psychiatry at Oregon Health and Science University, in Portland “Experiencing a delay in seasons” can cause a summer version of SAD in 1% of the population. This could be due to imbalances in brain chemistry and the hormone melatonin.

SAD can make the, “winter you”, feel: hopeless, sad, tense, and stressed. Faced with the ending of the year, you find you've no interest in friends or activities normally so attractive. The days are getting shorter, the year is ending, unprepared the seasonal transition can leave some in a real

case of depression.



CAUSATION AND EXPECTATIONS..TRIGGERS

While the triggers for a SAD episode are fairly straight forward, other bouts of depression often seem to “set in”. In truth, though, there are many precursors leading up to full blown depression.

These are some common triggers to consider.

Smoking

Smoking has long been linked with depression, though it's a chicken-or-egg scenario: People who are depression-prone may be more likely to take up the habit.

However, nicotine is known to affect neurotransmitter activity in the brain, resulting in higher levels of dopamine and serotonin (which is also the mechanism of action for antidepressant drugs).

This may explain the addictive nature of the drug, and the mood swings that come with withdrawal. This may also be why depression is associated with smoking cessation. Without a doubt, quitting smoking is a major step toward better health, and avoiding cigarettes—staying smoke free—could help balance your brain chemicals. If you are a smoker, consider getting on a Nicotine reduction program. Now days, there are so many great options available. Everything from the, “patch”, to gum, to a shot. Just pick one and STICK with it. Do not spastically jump from one thing to the other, as you need to track your mental and physical results as much as possible. Tracking is the key here. Actively tracking things like this, puts mental distance between your thoughts feelings, and mental states. That said, PLEASE do not turn to Vaping. Vaping is soon to be the next big addiction. From one health negative to another

is a bad trade. Make a point to quit nicotine completely

Sleep

It's no surprise that sleep deprivation can lead to irritability, but it could also increase the risk of depression.

A 2007 study found that when healthy participants were deprived of sleep, they had greater brain activity after viewing upsetting images than their well-rested counterparts, which is similar to the reaction that depressed patients have, noted one of the study authors.

“If you don't sleep, you don't have time to replenish [brain cells], the brain stops functioning well, and one of the many factors that could lead to is depression,” says Matthew Edlund, MD, director of the Center for Circadian Medicine, in Sarasota, Fla., and author of *The Power of Rest*.

If you have trouble sleeping, there are a number of things you can do. The first...is, you guessed it! Track. Track your sleep cycles, track all your, “inputs” (everything you eat, drink, media watched and when), and the particulars of your internal language. The second is try to lay down earlier than you have to sleep. Third, get (or make) a sleep mask. Using the mask programs your brain to go into sleep mode. Try it consistently. Fourth, if after fifteen

minutes of laying down, you don't feel sleepy, get back up. The important thing here, is not to freak out about not sleeping! Freaking out will not help. So. Get up find a comfortable chair or lay on the floor, and relax, take 10 deep breaths in...then out. On the inhale get a mental picture of falling asleep so peacefully, so quickly. Continue this, in and out, on the in breath breathe as slowly as you can, so slowly (perhaps count to 20) then out at the same speed, still keeping that mental picture in your mind. Do this for 30 seconds at a time then without stressing, head back to bed. Again no judging yourself, or freaking out. Relax.

Facebook/Social Networking Sites

Spending too much time in chat rooms and on social-networking sites? A number of studies now suggest that this can be associated with depression, particularly in teens and preteens. [Internet addicts](#) may struggle with real-life human interaction and a lack of companionship, and they may have an unrealistic view of the world. Some experts even call it “Facebook depression.”

In a 2010 study, researchers found that about 1.2% of people ages 16 to 51 spent an inordinate amount of time online, and that they had a higher rate of moderate to severe depression. However, the researchers noted that it is not

clear if Internet overuse leads to depression or if depressed people are more likely to use the Internet.

So this should not come as a shock, but the idyllic pictures you see on the social networks where all your friends seem to be doing so much better than you, are in fact posted to make them look as awesome as possible. Comparing yourself to others, is near guaranteed to lead you down a bad path. Be aware. Don't compare.

Location

You can endlessly debate whether city or country life is better. But research has found that people living in urban settings do have a 39% higher risk of mood disorders than those in rural regions. A 2011 study in the journal *Nature* offers an explanation for this trend: City dwellers have more activity in the part of the brain that regulates stress. And higher levels of stress could lead to psychotic disorders.

Depression rates also vary by country and state. Even altitude may play a role.

Too Many Options to Consider

The sheer number of options available—whether it's face cream, breakfast cereal, or appliances—can be overwhelming. That's not a problem for shoppers who pick

the first thing that meets their needs, according to some psychologists. However, other people respond to choice overload by maximizing, or exhaustively reviewing their options in the search for the very best item. Research suggests that this coping style is linked to perfectionism and depression. If you are someone for whom choice is a problem, when practical, consider giving yourself a specific amount of time to come to a decision, and then stick by it.

Family Dysfunction

Although unhappy relationships with anyone can cause depression, a 2007 study in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* found that men who didn't get along with their siblings before age 20 were more likely to be depressed later in life than those who did. Although it's not clear what's so significant about sibling relationships (the same wasn't true for relationships with parents), researchers suggest that they could help children develop the ability to relate with peers and socialize. Regardless of the reason, too much squabbling is associated with a greater risk of developing depression before age 50.

The Pill

Like any medication, the Pill can have side effects. Oral contraceptives contain a synthetic version of progesterone,

which studies suggest can lead to depression in some women. The reason is still unknown, says Hilda Hutcherson, MD, clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Columbia University, in New York. “It doesn’t happen to everyone, but if women have a history of depression or are prone to depression, they have an increased chance of experiencing depression symptoms while taking birth control pills,” Dr. Hutcherson says. “Some women just can’t take the Pill; that’s when we start looking into alternative contraception, like a diaphragm, which doesn’t contain hormones.

Depression is a side effect of many medications. For example, Accutane and its generic version (isotretinoin) are prescribed to clear up severe acne, but depression and suicidal thoughts are a potential risk for some people. Depression is a possible side effect for anxiety and insomnia drugs, including Valium and Xanax; Lopressor, prescribed to treat high blood pressure; cholesterol-lowering drugs including Lipitor; and Premarin for menopausal symptoms. Read the potential side effects when you take a new medication, and always check with your doctor to see if you might be at risk.



MAKE IT GO AWAY, OR WHAT ARE MY TREATMENT OPTIONS

These days, when someone get's ill the first thing they want is a pill to make it all better. The truth is, though like many illnesses, most of the time, the root of the problem is not known. It's buried deep. This is especially true of mental illnesses.

Enter the first treatment option, **Psychiatry** and

prescription drugs. A note of caution here. Just like there are bad mechanics, so too are there mental health professionals who are not as adept as others. Remember, this is not a car, it's your BRAIN, and you've only got one. So, consider all the treatment options before jumping into one. If you choose to start taking route, you may begin with an initial psychiatric assessment, a case history, culminating in a mental status evaluation. You may take a battery of psychological tests. Mental disorders are often diagnosed in accordance with criteria listed in diagnostic manuals such as the widely used *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM). After the tests your mental health professional will recommend treatment. I caution you once more, you are the one who will be helped or severely hobbled by whichever psychiatrist you trust. His ability, and experience must be weighed. The central difference between Psychiatry and the next treatment option, Psychology, is the former can prescribe drugs. Also, Psychiatry is generally more interested in dragging all of your self history out, trying to find out where it all started so to speak. Both branches use many of the same techniques and methods.

Speaking of methods, they both may recommend anti-depressants. Consider that as I write this, there are 47 different drugs for the treatment of depression. I personally do not take any of them. I've been on them, and the first thing I did, as soon as possible was stop, and swear them

off for good!

All these drugs must be taken for around three weeks till they build to a certain level in your body, after which you **MUST** continue to dose. Once you build up a certain level in your system (about two weeks) you cannot just stop! Violating this truth is to blame for many treatment abnormalities and alarming episodes! This is what makes this illness so challenging. See, depression cycles from high to low. Depression's shifting nature can lead the patient who feeling great, stops their meds, or perhaps worse, increases them. Either of which can lead to catastrophic consequences! I know from experience. Trust me. If you decide to start taking this stuff to manage your cycles, and subsequently want to try another alternative, talk to your doctor. He or she will likely recommend a gradual medication reduction which usually lasts two weeks. After that you'll be free to try Grandpa Joe's Cod Liver Wunder Elixir or whatever other method you favor...

Also please note, ***mixing these, or any other drugs with alcohol can end unpredictably.*** Do not forget you are taking this stuff and go out have a beer or six and expect to be feeling normal. You have no idea how you'll be feeling, if at all. I urge you to take responsibility for your care in all respects.

The second option, is **Psychology**. Unlike Psychiatry, which seeks to dig through your past experiences, trying to find the cause of it all so to speak, psychology is more concerned with fixing you as you are. It's often characterized as talk therapy, and is commonly mixed with the potent and almost immediate managing effects of the aforementioned antidepressant drugs. There are six different branches of psychotherapy. Like many other complex sciences, there are many primary, and secondary, differences between them. In general you'll talk about what is going on, your feelings, opinion as to why, and what the situation means for your life. There are a wide variety of techniques they might employ including hypnotherapy, role play, and occasionally light therapy.



THERE'S A BETTER WAY...3 NATURAL TREATMENTS

1. **Omega-3 fatty acids.** These healthy fats are found in cold-water fish, flaxseed, flax oil, walnuts and some other foods. Omega-3 supplements are being studied as a possible treatment for depression. While considered generally safe, in high doses, omega-3 supplements may interact with other medications. More research is needed to determine if eating

foods with omega-3 fatty acids can help relieve depression.

2. **Schisandra**- “Chinese Prozac” is the perfect herb for stressed out depression. *Schisandra chinensis berries* improve mood, break up anxiety, and through their “adaptogen” properties, enhance libido, and aid the liver’s detoxification.

I would say if you are a stressed out stay at home mom with a low libido and feeling frazzled then this herb is most likely created just for you! Standard capsule dose is two 500mg capsules taken twice daily.

3. **5 HTP and L-Tyrosine**. These two substances, are found in the brain already. To be safe, the recommended ratio is 10:1. Ten units of L-Tyrosine for every 1 unit of 5-HTP. So maybe 500 mg of L-Tyrosine in the morning and 50 mg of 5-HTP in the evening. You can safely use up to 3,000 mg of L-Tyrosine with 300 mg of 5-HTP daily. Never use just 5-HTP or L-Tyrosine independently.



**7 THINGS YOU CAN START DOING
TODAY TO MANAGE, AND LIMIT
DEPRESSION'S IMPACT UPON YOUR
LIFE.**

In actuality, anyone can
experience depression. In

fact, statistics say 1 out of 10 Americans will identify as depressive at some point in their lives.

But creatives tend to experience the depressive state longer, and more intensely. This is due to the creative's tendency to ponder, flip ideas, tease meaning from esoteric pieces; plus we are in fact more in tune with our minds AND feelings. This means when the depressive thoughts come, it's more difficult to break the spell so to speak. Yes, we are different, we think crazy unusual thoughts, and dream out loud on our canvases however big. With our eyes wide open we ride the mad, mad roller coaster rails of creation, add in depression's familiar scourge and if we are not careful it can make for some challenging days. Whether you identify as a creative or not, (and I believe to a great degree we all ARE), there are steps you can take right now, TODAY, to get a handle on things...

You

Made

It...



Commit to doing these seven steps TODAY!!!

Journal. This is KEY!!! Commit to a daily practice of thought and mental state tracking. A word of caution here. You may find some of them overwhelming, outrageous, hateful, spiteful, vengeful, or even dangerous. Do not let this concern you. It'll help if you imagine you have two minds. One, the thinking brain, is what you use when you are trying to figure out how to do a specific problem, like $2+2$. The other is the automatic mind. This is in essence, a ticker tape machine. If you don't know what that is, Google it. A long time ago it was a machine which continuously spit out pieces of paper with information printed on it. In the dual mind concept, the machine (your brain) is spitting out thoughts, most of which you didn't ask for, and have no control over. This means all those thoughts you have been hoarding, those unthinkable ones, the ones you feel such shame for, more than likely just mean you are human. While it could be you have some truly abhorrent thoughts, for instance if you fantasize about cutting the mailman's throat, playing in his blood, and in fact have the beginnings of a detailed plan. Thoughts of that nature with planning or not, could mean you should go talk with someone. The truth is though, the majority of your thoughts are like wind, they have no impact till you act on them in some way, or agree

they are true. This is where tracking, considering and refuting these thoughts, comes in. It's the single greatest power of journaling. Also as Depression is a cyclical event, there are going to be a range of days, from bad, sorta bad, and flipping fantastic great. By keeping this journal, you'll be better prepared. You'll know where in the cycle you are. Make a point to consistently journal and you'll be aware of the peaks and valleys. If you are keeping track, you have the power to pay closer attention to your mental speech on the days when your journal indicates a downward trend. There is no doubt, negative mental speech is incredibly powerful. Tell yourself you are a horrible person, who doesn't deserve anything good, and more often than not, that is who you will be.

But start a new CONSISTENT pattern, insist on a new mental diatribe TODAY, make it a point to stay away from ceaselessly, mentally beating yourself up, and trust me, positive change will occur.

The big takeaway is find strength where you can, and acknowledging ownership and control of your changing states is a sign of strength, while ignoring, and pretending is not. Journal, get an app, whatever you must do, track your cycles. Be honest. Doing this will allow you to see where you have been so to speak, and give you power to move past a depressive episode. Trust me.

Confide. Depression masquerades as normal life. See any of your favorite comedians, how can they be depressed? Look at them they are FUNNY!!! Yep. And many are fighting the same battle you and I are. Depressed people tend to fall into the trap of believing its a weakness, and they should just get over it. This is why so many keep it to themselves, often with tragic circumstances. Yep, falling into this mental trap, can lead to tragedy, and leaves the circle which would have stepped in to help at a loss. From experience we know depression looks just like normal, so confide! Do not let depression crush you down into the meek mouse in a corner! Robin Williams was just the latest guy-who-has-it-all-closed up-depressive to fall victim, there were plenty more before him.

Acknowledge. Depression is personal. It belongs to you, its different in important ways and the same as well. Do not fall victim to the thought that you will just snap out of it. If you had the Chicken Pox would you just keep going to work like everything was fine or would you own up to the condition? Right! Own your state, mental and physical, as this is key to getting a handle on your depression. Refusing to acknowledge how depression to some extent is a created mental form, you gain NO strength, no understanding. Look at it this way, if you were solid high on legal Morphine, and a depressive thought came through your mind, would you be as likely to follow the impulse or

not as much? Right. So there is a process, there are thoughts which when you go over them and over them, (called ruminating) then you move farther and farther into the depressive state. So to follow the trail you have to be willing to pay attention. So acknowledge your condition and pay attention.

Speak. The good news is and please hear me clearly, is you are not alone. Depression tends to hide that fact from us. It paints you into a corner if you let it, it's chief message being, YOU are the problem. While there are mental cycles, and we all go through them, seldom is a depressive convinced everyone else is the problem. So if you are feeling depressive, to the extent possible engage with others. When you can't hardly open your mouth because you are SO tired of hearing your voice say the same things, speak anyway. Pay close attention to your mental language when you do. Break through depression's silence, it is a must, so you can get perspective on your struggles. Depression is a crushing mental state, literally, it mashes you down into the tiniest ball, and some days you'd be happy to be even smaller, Like Alice small. But that is not the way to a successful productive you. So please speak your struggles, your pain, and your successes. Call the hotline if you must. Heck, these days there is a text help line. Commit to take care of you.

Ask. Depression sucks your will. Takes everything

paints it in dark colors, takes every statement, and event, and molds it to it's will. So you have to ask whether what is happening is even true. You have to question your thoughts, and the conclusions you are making. Be the investigator not the victim. Asking brings the internal to external, puts some distance between you and the depressive impulse. That space is important. Depression is driven by circular "thought" (rumination) which leads to the dark, adopting a questioning attitude shows how you're believing. This can help you choose how to act on all those thoughts, and feelings. It reveals the context in which your life is being run. Why is powerful. You were not depressed at age 1.5! Asking why can get you back to the root cause. Being a victim ignoring and pretending, or worse ONLY medicating only masks, varnishes. You may need medication I have in the past, but when you can to the best of your ability, play the old children's favorites, ask WHY??? HOW? WHEN? Shine a bright light on the internal. See if you can get back to being the carefree child once more. Ask.

Therapy. Look I'm not a doctor, and don't play one on TV, errrm K? These are MY suggestions and tips from my life experiences, personal reading, and through years of coaching/mentoring. Ok? Great. So take YOUR opinion on this and all other subjects, do not think I'm telling you what to do. That said, here is what I know about being on drugs for depression. To start with it's your brain, and while it

seems like it never changes, like it is super stable, etc, it isn't. Medication comes with caveats, and cautions. Antidepressants are working on your brain. There is no way to be certain of the day to day effect this will have on your current (or future) self perception, personality, and well being. In other words, unless it's absolutely necessary, (and you and your doctor are the final say on that), avoid the heavy drugs such as Symbax, Zoloft, etc. Seek group therapy, alternative therapy, such as brain entrainment, relief through art, or music. Once you are on prescription drugs, you may start feeling like they are supposed to be the cure all, and for the majority they won't be. Depression is a continually varying mental state. There is in fact not a depressive button in your brain for lithium or whatever to seek out and unstick.

Not to mention being a victim to your condition almost guarantees it will be harder to throw off the depressive state. Depending upon the drug to do it for you is common and limiting tendency. Consider your options carefully.

Creativity. Think about it like this, if you didn't have to go to work, if you lived in complete isolation without any obligations whatsoever, would even medium strength depression mean much? No. It is your obligations which complicate being in a depressive state. So your minute to minute mental state interacting with your obligations, your

life, may necessitate drugs to keep you on an even keel. But many recent experiments show that's all they do. I encourage you to find your creativity! Whenever prudent and possible strive to be free like a child again.

Repressed creativity has been shown to express in unhealthy relationships, overwhelming stress, severe neurotic or even psychotic behavior, and addictive behaviors including alcoholism. But perhaps the most insidious and common manifestation of repressed creativity in women is depression.

It doesn't matter whether you'll every be famous or make tons of money at it. If you have a challenging day, and come home and pass out on the couch, when you wake up your mind will not have moved very far from where it was when you went to sleep. Write, paint, sing, put models together, volunteer your time. Live your passion. As often as you can, commit to live life again.

AN AFTERWORD



Depression in it's many forms, sucks the now perception out of your brain. Thinking about it like you are a machine, which you kind of are, its as if when you are depressed, your CPU is so overloaded, it shuts off it's external sensors. This leaves you with the same 37 persistent thoughts whipping and bouncing around in your head.

In an advanced state this can mean kind words or positive thoughts, get through. And of course like a gated

colander. everything negative, easily slips through. We just keep going over these thoughts, around and around, flipping them, turning them, tormented by them, unable to get out of the spin. Ruminating it's called. I've experienced this exact scenario so many times. I'm sure you can relate. The thing is, while it seems like we are all super different, living completely separate lives,(one of depression's main themes, eg I'm alone, I'm different, I'm the problem) the reality is we are all very similar. So while our particular depressive thoughts may differ, the aspects, the feelings, the drivers, the limiters, and limitations of depression are quite the same. Some days you feel like you can't get off the couch, like you just want to sleep and stop for a while. I know this feeling, intimately. Set, "anchors", things you do every day, or each week, so you'll start to see when things begin to shift away from you being your best you. Above all, remember you are not alone. Ever. Your feelings are feelings, and though they might be crazy right now, follow the steps I've outlined in this book, and if necessary seek counseling. If you EVER need to, call the Suicide Hotline, they are always ready to work with you, no matter whether you are just a bit down, or ten times worse. The point is DO something. Don't let depression keep you from doing life. Every day you spend down, is one too many. Trust me I've battled, I've fallen, I've won, I've lost. There have been days when I almost needed meds just to get out of bed. Truly, the struggle is as they say very real. But you got this book.

So I know you refuse to bow, and you will continue to fight, cause that is who you are. You know being the warrior who refuses to quit is the only way out! Celebrate the reasons why you refuse to quit, if only cause you don't want depression to suck one more day out of you. This is exactly why I wrote this book. If only one person sees themselves in my story, and it helps them, I will have succeeded mightily. Be well.