

Negative, unrealistic ways of thinking that fuel depression

1. **All-or-nothing thinking**-Looking at things in black-or-white categories, with no middle ground (If everything is not perfect, I'm a total failure)
2. **Overgeneralization**-Generalizing from a negative experience, expecting it to hold true forever (I had a bad date, I'll never find anyone")
3. **The mental filter**-Ignoring positive events and focusing on the negative. Noticing the one thing that went wrong, rather than all the things that went right. ("I got the last question on the test wrong. I'm an idiot." _
4. **Diminishing the positive**- Coming up with reasons why positive events don't count ("She said she had a good time on our date, but I think she was just being nice.")
5. **Jumping to conclusions**- Making negative interpretations without actual evidence. You act like a mind reader ("He must think I'm pathetic") or a fortuneteller ("I'll be stuck in this dead-end job forever.")
6. **Emotional reasoning**- Believing that the way you feel reflects reality (I feel like such a loser. Everyone must be laughing at me!)
7. **'Shoulds' and 'should-nots'**- Holding yourself to a strict list of what you should and shouldn't do, and beating yourself up if you don't live up to your rules. ("I should never have interviewed for that job. I'm an idiot for thinking I could get it.")
8. **Labeling**- Classifying yourself based on mistakes and perceived shortcomings ("I'm a failure; an idiot; a loser.")

Put your thoughts on the witness stand

Once you identify the destructive thoughts patterns that contribute to your depression, you can start to challenge them with questions such as:

- "What's the evidence that this thought is true? Not true?"
- "What would I tell a friend who had this thought?"
- "Is there another way of looking at the situation or an alternate explanation?"
- "How might I look at this situation if I didn't have depression?"

As you cross-examine your negative thoughts, you may be surprised at how quickly they crumble. In the process, you'll develop a more balanced perspective and help to relieve your depression.

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Tips for Coping with Depression



Reference: Coping with Depression. (2019, June 11). Retrieved from <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/coping-with-depression.htm>

Why is dealing with depression so difficult?

Depression drains your energy, hope, and drive, making it difficult to take the steps that will help you to feel better. Sometimes, just thinking about the things you should do to feel better, like exercising or spending time with friends, can seem exhausting or impossible to put into action.

While recovering from depression isn't quick or easy, 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.

Coping with Depression Tips.



Tip 1: Reach out and stay connected.

Getting support plays an essential role in overcoming depression. On your own, it can be difficult to maintain a healthy perspective and sustain the effort required to beat depression. At the same time, the very nature of depression makes it difficult to reach out for help. When you're depressed, the tendency is to withdraw and isolate so that connecting to even close family members and friends can be tough.

10 tips for staying connected

1. Talk to one person about your feelings
2. Help someone else by volunteering
3. Have lunch or coffee with a friend
4. Ask a loved one to check in with you regularly
5. Accompany someone to the movies, a concert, or a small get-together
6. Call or email an old friend
7. Go for a walk with a workout buddy
8. Schedule a weekly dinner date
9. Meet new people by taking a class or joining a club.
10. Confide in a clergy member, teacher, or sports coach.

Tip 2: Do things that make you feel good

In order to overcome depression, you have to do things that relax and energize you. This includes following a healthy lifestyle, learning how to better manage stress, setting limits on what you're able to do, and scheduling fun activities into your day.

Develop a "wellness toolbox" to deal with depression

Try to implement a few of these ideas each day, even if you are feeling good.

1. Spend some time in nature
2. List what you like about yourself
3. Read a good book
4. Watch a funny movie or TV show
5. Take a long, hot bath
6. Take care of a few small tasks
7. Play with a pet
8. Talk to friends or family face -to - face
9. Listen to music
10. Do something spontaneous

Tip 3: Get moving

When you're depressed, just getting out of bed can seem like a daunting task, let alone working out! But exercise is a powerful depression fighter—and one of the most important tools in your recovery arsenal. Research shows that regular exercise can be as effective as medication for relieving depression symptoms. It also helps prevent relapse once you're well.

Exercise is something you can do right now to boost your mood.

1. Your fatigue will improve if you stick with it.
2. Find exercises that are continuous and rhythmic.
3. Add a mindfulness element-Focus on how your body.
4. Pair up with an exercise partner.
5. Take a dog for a walk.

Tip 4: Eat a healthy, depression-fighting diet

What you eat has a direct impact on the way you feel. Reduce your intake of foods that can adversely affect your brain and mood, such as caffeine, alcohol, trans fats, and foods with high levels of chemical preservatives or hormones (such as certain meats)

1. Don't skip meals.
2. Minimize sugar and refined carbs
3. Boost your B vitamins
4. Boost your mood with foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

Tip 5: Get a daily dose of sunlight



Sunlight can help boost serotonin levels and improve your mood. Whenever possible, get outside during daylight hours and expose yourself to the sun for at least 15 minutes a day. Remove sunglasses (but never stare directly at the sun) and use sunscreen as needed.

1. Take a walk on your lunch break, have your coffee outside, enjoy an al fresco meal, or spend time gardening.
2. Double up on the benefits of sunlight by exercising outside. Try hiking, walking in a local park, or playing golf or tennis with a friend.
3. Increase the amount of natural light in your home and workplace by opening blinds and drapes and sitting near windows.
4. If you live somewhere with little winter sunshine, try using a light therapy box

Tip 6: Challenge negative thinking

Do you feel like you're powerless or weak? That bad things happen and there's not much you can do about it? That your situation



is hopeless? Depression puts a negative spin on everything, including the way you see yourself and your expectations for the future. When these types of thoughts overwhelm you, it's important to remember that this is a symptom of your depression and these irrational, pessimistic attitudes—known as cognitive distortions—aren't realistic. When you really examine them they don't hold up. But even so, they can be tough to give up. You can't break out of this pessimistic mind frame by telling yourself to "just think positive." Often, it's part of a lifelong pattern of thinking that's become so automatic you're not even completely aware of it. Rather, the trick is to identify the type of negative thoughts that are fueling your depression, and replace them with a more balanced way of thinking.