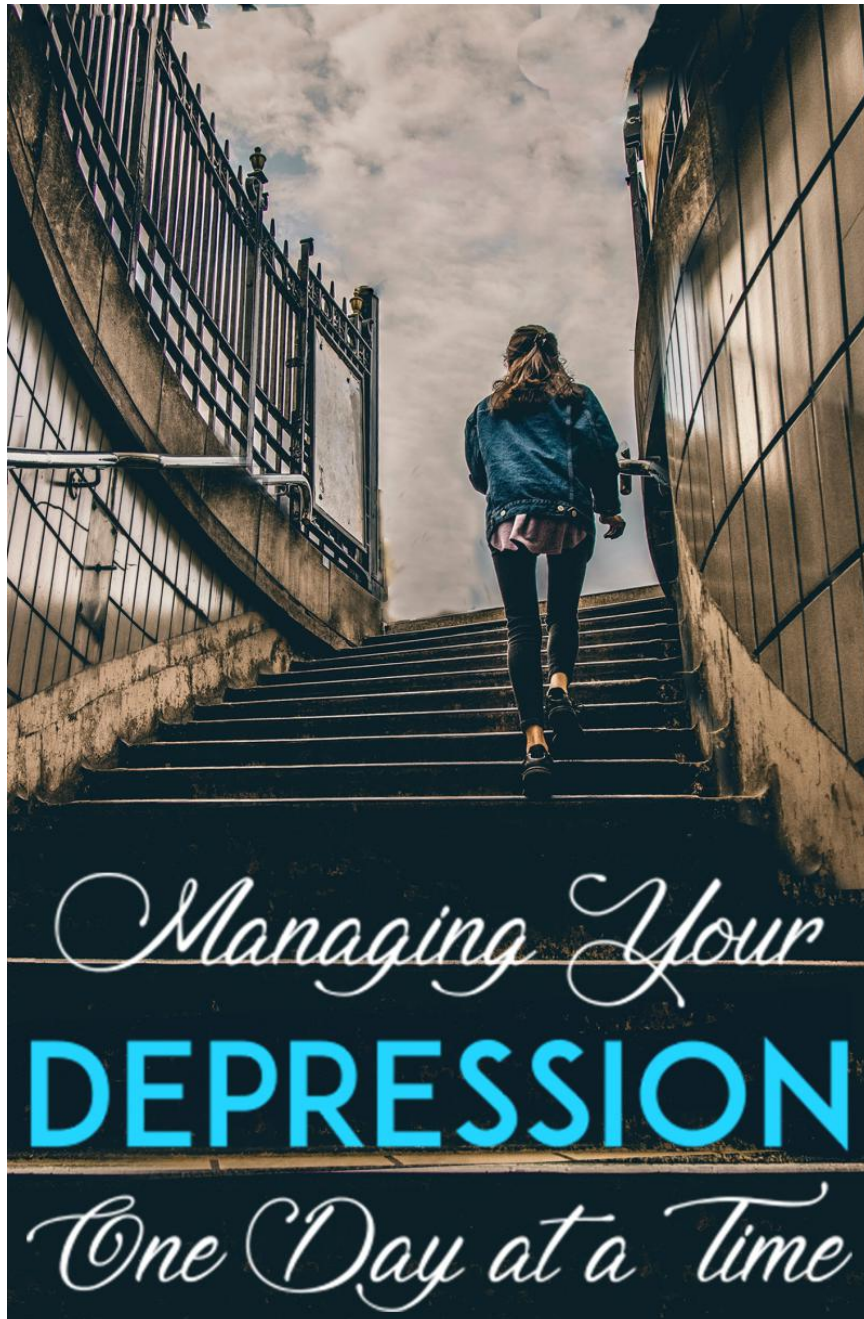


# Managing Your Depression One Day at a Time



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**DEPRESSION**  
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## Managing Your Depression One Day at a Time

How do you cope with feeling of depression? For a lot of people, depression can be a major obstacle that slows or halts progress, and can keep you from achieving the things that you are truly capable of accomplishing. If this is something that you are familiar with, you're probably at the point where you would like to find some new ways to approach things.

### *Who Is Affected?*

When it comes to depression, the range of people that are affected is relatively large. Depression can show up in all sorts of ways, and be manifested in a range of reactions and behaviors. Until the last few decades, very little was known about what depression can really do to change the way that people interact with the world around them.

This often leads to various types of misdiagnosis. It has also been remarked that the personal beliefs of some doctors may have clouded their judgement. People of all races, sexes, ages and financial stations are affected by depression, but in recent years, studies have shown that there is a growing number of people in younger age groups that are experiencing difficulties as a result of depression.

### *Looking at the Causes*

When looking at the facts, it becomes very clear that the causes of depression can be just as numerous as the types of people that it can affect. Events that take place at a young or impressionable age, poverty, genetics, health, and random trauma can make a serious impact on the way that a person develops.

From looking at the science, scientists have discovered that events that take place in people's lives can even influence DNA changes. This means that it could be possible that these changes are not only recorded by your body, and possibly could be passed on to your children. Studies of PTSD in animals have also yielded results that support this possibility.

## 1. Be Kind to Yourself

The first thing you need to do in the new year when you are working on managing your depression is to be kind, and give yourself a break. Make sure you are maintaining a positive attitude going through each day, and it can help you have the strength and mindset to work on your depression. This is not going to cure it, and you shouldn't ignore other treatments and medications you have been taking, but it is a step in the right direction.

### *Being More Positive*

When you're feeling down, it's easy to become your own worst enemy. This can make you take the blame for things that aren't your fault, and avoid taking responsibility for things that are. It should be no surprise then, that the very things that are the hardest to complete when you are in the deepest of pits will probably be the exact things that can help you to get more control over your depression. If you find yourself dwelling on negative thoughts and tearing yourself down, then you'll need to make sure to practice changing that habit.

### *Say Nice Things to Yourself*

The internal chatter that you have can greatly influence that way that you feel about yourself, so it's extremely important that you pay very close attention to the things that you say to yourself. Accusatory, negative thoughts where you insult yourself routinely can put a very real world spin on how you feel about yourself, so it'll become necessary for you to begin taking time out during your day to say something positive to yourself. It might feel fun to be cynical about life, but the hidden cost could be high.

### *Depression Changes How You Feel*

The most important thing to remember during all of these steps is that the depression is the reason why you are feeling the way you feel. Depression will make you feel as though you are incapable to dealing with everyday things, and the world can feel as

though it's against you sometimes. This makes forward motion very hard, but one thing that you can do is simply start. Take one step, even if it's the smallest step. Tomorrow you can take another one.

## 2. Learn Something New

It is also a great idea to keep working on yourself, and make a commitment to yourself. This is how you will learn how to manage your depression on a daily basis. If you always do everything the same, you will never feel any different.

### *Learning a New Skill*

While time to rest is a good thing, idle time can be an open doorway to problems. Sometimes the best medicine is to stay busy with something that gives you a sense of accomplishment. Taking on a project that can give your new skills can be a tremendous boost to your confidence, because sometimes all you need is the reminder of how capable you are.

Hobbies like sculpture, painting and music are all things that you can do in spare time, and they are much better choices of how to spend time than dwelling on things that are out of your control.

### *Get into Some Creative Work*

Art is great for people. That's why it's used in rehabilitation in so many different fields. There's a type of power that creative expression can have on people. If you've never really thought about doing any type of art, it might be worth it to just try something. You never know what might keep your attention and help you to wash away the negative thoughts.

### *Take a Leap*

Depression can sneak up on you. Even though there are many areas where humans like to have routines, living on a very small track where you repeat the same tasks can be grating. A change of pace might be your solution.

If you are a creature of habit who stays within a small geographical area most of every year, then doing something like a day trip could be what you need to perk things back up. Be spontaneous. Ask someone you're curious about to hang out. Reach out for advice from someone you respect. Almost anything can be turning into a great opportunity to learn something new.

### 3. Make Small, Daily Changes

As you embark on your journey to improve your depression and other mental health issues you experience, it is important to keep those daily habits in mind. This can really help you to feel better on a daily basis, and not let your mental health consume you.

Here are some small, daily changes that can make a big difference in how you feel.

#### *Try Some Light Exercise*

One of the top overlooked activities that can help you to manage your depression is exercise. When you give your body a workout, your brain releases chemicals that help to regulate mood and other processes in your body. These can help take the edge off of your depression, and even put a major clamp down on your anxiety.

When you are exercising for your health, as opposed to weight loss or fitness, you have more freedom in the types of exercises you choose. Start slow and experiment with different types of physical activity until you find what works best for you.

It can be a light walk around the block, or just a few crunches. The idea here, is just to do a little bit of something, and work your way up slowly in small ways. This will keep you from feeling overwhelmed and protect you from the possibility of injuries.

#### *Avoid Depressants*

Unfortunately, you might be participating in some bad habits that are making your depression worse, or at least increasing the depression symptoms.

To start with, alcohol can make your depression much worse. Drinking large quantities of depressants like alcohol can increase your depression. This is because substances

that are put into the body often become a part of the processes that your body has in its routine.

When you go without the things your body is used to, then your body is likely to manufacture unpleasant sensations that will motivate you to want to indulge the urges.

The best thing to do in those situations would be to taper off in a way that allows your body to adjust to the changes to your habits. In a few cases it might be advisable to seek medical help to make sure that there won't be other complications from your new endeavor, but it is pretty rare that an extreme reaction will develop that would make it completely necessary.

### *Go into the Light*

Did you know that the human body needs a certain amount of light per day? Studies looking at the effects of light on the body have shown that your body favors natural light over artificial light. This could be because of the fact that artificial light is generally less effective than natural light that comes from the sun.

Sunlight interacts with cells in your body that tell your body how to regulate some of its essential processes. This includes the amount of hormones it produces that control when you sleep and how your food is processed. Take some time to get out during the day and soak up some of that sunlight.

Think of small ways to get outside more each day, such as:

Taking your lunch break outside.

Going for an extra walk in the morning or at night.

Taking your dog on a longer walk in the sunshine.

Spending your weekends with outdoor activities.

## 4. Sleep and Meditation

Relaxing your body and mind are equally important when you are dealing with a lot of depression triggers, or when your depression causes fatigue and trouble sleeping.

This section is going to cover two very important parts of helping to manage your depression – meditating and practicing mindfulness, and getting more sleep.

### *Start Practicing Meditation*

Everyone needs some kind of peace and quiet. Some people a little extra focus and centering, so it might make sense for you to learn how to meditate effectively. The easiest way to do this is to find a quiet time and space in your home to focus on your breathing and heart rate. The more often your practice this will make it easier to slip into the meditation quickly. People often remark that they find their mind wandering at first but after a few weeks you might find that it is the most useful practice you've learned in quite some time.

### *Try Mindfulness*

Some people like to practice mindfulness while also meditating, but you can do one or the other. If you aren't yet ready to meditate and clear your mind, you can still benefit from adding more mindfulness to your life. Mindfulness is nothing more than living in the present, understanding what is happening now, appreciating the current moment, and not worrying too much about the past or the future.

It can be very therapeutic, especially for people with stress, anxiety, and depression.

### *Get More Sleep*

Another one of the forgotten methods of dealing with depression is maintaining a good sleep schedule. Your body needs sleep in order to function properly, and to give itself time to do repairs. Start focusing on getting better sleep, through meditation, taking your medications, getting more exercise, and improving your general mental health.

## 5. More Positive Habits

Here are some more positive habits that you can incorporate into your daily life this year to further help with your depression.

### *Spending Time with Friends*

When most people feel depressed, it can be easy for them to become overly absorbed in tasks and begin to isolate themselves. If you find yourself wanting to spend more time alone, it will allow you to dwell on unrealistic and unhealthy thinking. Having people around helps you to stay grounded and allows you to check yourself.

Of course, this means that you'll have to have people around that you can trust in a general sense, so it would be best to choose associations who know your personality. If you don't have many options, then you can try doing things that don't really require any companionship.

### *Get a Pet*

Have you ever owned a pet? Animals have a remarkable way of giving their human friends a lot of perspective. Animals are always living in the now. They love attention and they ask you for that attention that makes their day as often as they can. They also will put up with children that are loud and rough with them because they can be good with the younger members of almost any species.

Animals can sense when you need support, and their presence has been shown to reduce anxiety and depression in people who keep them around. While these furry friends are fun, it's also important to remember that they are individual creatures with their own personality traits, likes, and dislikes, so being open to their needs can take time to understand, but will be very rewarding in the long run.

### *Volunteer for a Cause You Care About*

If you've been feeling down, spending time helping others can be a really great help to your emotional state. Whether you're volunteering at a homeless shelter or just having some kids win a bike, the knowledge that you've done something for someone else can help you to feel good about yourself and the relationships with others. When you know that you've impacted the life of someone else in a meaningful way, and have a general sense of care towards that person, it can make you feel richer than actual money. Just be mindful of how and who you help. The operative thing here involves a sort of empathy that you have for others.

### *Make a List of Chores*

Depression can make it hard for you to want to take care of the daily stuff that makes your home comfortable and easy to feel relaxed within. When these things begin to pile up, it can take a lot out of you to even look at it. One way that you can create a plan of attack is to make a list of things that need to be done, and start by picking one easy thing to cross off of the list.

When you have a list of the chores, it'll be a lot easier for you to see an end in sight, and you'll feel good that you accomplished something that puts you close to having a nicer environment. If you can do even one thing each day, you'll be done within a week or two.