

COPING WITH DEPRESSION



Depression can keep you from doing your day-to-day activities which can cause guilt and shame. These emotions can worsen symptoms of depression and create a cyclic relationship.

One of the most crucial components of living with depression is learning how to break that cycle. When guilt, shame, and anger are added on top of the sadness, it makes it difficult to address the problem at the root.

There is no cure all to depression, but Easterseals MORC is here to provide guidance to alleviate the weight that depression can add.



**If you are in crisis, please call or
text the 988 Suicide & Crisis
Hotline.**

TIP 1: STAY CONNECTED

Depression can make you want to isolate, but it is crucial to keep in contact with those who matter to you and licensed professionals.



Whether it is in-person activities or virtual options, talking to others is important and it does not have to be about how you are feeling if that is not helpful for you.

Below is a list of ways you can stay connected:

- Volunteer to help someone.
- Ask a loved one to check in with you regularly.
- Schedule a weekly dinner with a friend or partner.
- Meet new people by taking a class.
- Video call friends and family.
- Choose a trusted individual or professional to confide in.
- Go on a walk with a friend.
- Say yes to plans that you are invited to.

TIP 2: DO THINGS YOU ENJOY

Sometimes depression can cause you to lose interest in the things you enjoy. Reconnecting with those things can help you to feel more centered within yourself. While you might not enjoy those things as much anymore or find the same pleasure, pushing yourself to do those things anyways can help you to feel more in control.

- Reading
- Knitting
- Listening to music
- Cleaning
- Hiking
- Working out
- Watching comfort TV
- Painting
- Playing an instrument
- Playing video games
- Practice a sport
- Sing
- Dance
- Baking
- Gardening
- Writing



TIP 3: BUILD A WELLNESS BOX

Depression can come in waves, some weeks you may feel the symptoms much more than others. During a week where you are experiencing minimal symptoms, invest in yourself by building a wellness box for the more difficult days.

What goes in your wellness box?

- A few of your favorite snacks
- A list of things you like about yourself
- Self-care notes (find some on Google or write them yourself!)
- Bath bombs
- Your favorite book
- A playlist of relaxing music.
- Comfy pair of pajamas.
- Good smelling soaps.
- Face masks.
- Fidget toys.
- Your favorite movie or TV show.
- Sour candies to combat any associated anxiety.



TIP 4: CHALLENGE YOUR NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

Indulging in negative thoughts leads you down a path that gives unrealistic thinking, life. Here are some examples of negative thoughts that should be reframed.

- **All-or-nothing thinking:** Looking at things in black-or-white categories, with no middle ground. “If I can’t do this, I am a loser.”
- **Overgeneralization:** Generalizing from a single negative experience, expecting it to hold true forever. “I’ll never be good at this.”
- **Jumping to conclusions:** Making negative interpretations without actual evidence. You act like a mind reader or a fortune teller. “They hate me.”
- **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. “They didn’t laugh at my joke, they must think I’m so stupid.”

TIP 5: GET SUNSHINE

Being out in the sun is scientifically proven to release serotonin and boosts vitamin D levels which improve mood.

While it may not be easy to dedicate time to being out in the sun, you can take the things you dedicate time to outside. You can enjoy your lunch outdoors or suggest hanging out with your friends on a hike or a walk.



FRIENDLY REMINDERS

Mental illness is not a weakness, and it does not make you less of a person because you are struggling with it.

It is so important that you recognize what capabilities you have during a low period and not feel shame about what those are.

It will not always feel like this, especially once you put the tools in place to better manage the low periods.

You are important and you are worthy!



Easterseals MORC has many free downloadable resources like this one available for the community



To access more free resources or learn more about us, please visit www.EastersealsMORC.org

Source:

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/coping-with-depression.htm>