



DEPRESSION

You can overcome it!

Depression drains your energy, hope, and drive, making it difficult to take the steps that will help you to feel better. But while overcoming depression isn't quick or easy, it's far from impossible.

How to deal with depression

If the depression is severe, you will need medication to treat it, but you can also try some of these self-help strategies in less severe cases.

Dealing with depression requires action, but taking action when you're depressed can be hard. Taking the first step is always the hardest, but going for a walk or doing some light exercise is something you can do right now. And it can substantially boost your mood and energy for several hours.

By taking the following small but positive steps day by day, you'll soon lift the heavy fog of depression and find yourself feeling happier, healthier, and more hopeful again:

- **Reach out and stay connected**

It can be difficult to overcome depression on your own, so it is important to get support from family, friends or people you can trust.

- **Do things that make you feel good**

To overcome depression, you have to do things that relax and energise you.

- Pick up a former hobby or a sport you used to like.
- Express yourself creatively through music, art, or writing.
- Go out with friends.
- Take a day trip to a museum, nature, or a sports event.
- Play with your pet, visit friends, or listen to your favourite music.

These things will help you to feel more positive and will energise you.



- **Get moving**

When you're depressed, just getting out of bed can seem like a challenging task, let alone working out! But exercise is a powerful depression fighter and one of the most important tools to heal. Find exercises that are continuous and rhythmic, such as walking, running or yoga. Add a mindfulness element to it by focusing on how your body feels as you move, such as the sensation of your feet hitting the ground, or the feeling of the wind on your skin.

- **Eat a healthy, depression-fighting diet**

What you eat has a direct impact on the way you feel. Eat less foods that can negatively affect your brain and mood, such as caffeine, alcohol, foods with trans fats such as pies, cakes doughnuts and frozen pizzas.

- **Get a daily dose of sunlight**

Sunlight can help boost your serotonin levels and improve your mood. Serotonin is a substance in your body that helps nerve cells control your mood, appetite, sleep and more. Whenever possible, get outside during daylight hours and expose yourself to the sun for at least 15 minutes a day.

- **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 aren't realistic. When you really examine them, they don't hold up.

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.

If you feel you need help with dealing with depression, we are here to support you. EAP Counselors **(010 133 0525)** are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, to offer counselling and support. You are also welcome to book an appointment with one of our Psychologists by calling **014 590 1700** or **080 000 6942**.