A holistic approach to depression

Design your own coping strategies

This exercise can help you to build coping strategies that work for you. Not everyone finds the same things helpful. When you discover what works for you, you will be on your way to having more control over your mood.

1. List what you enjoy most from each category below. Add your own ideas for positive expressions and actions.

2. Practice what you like most. Make it easy and enjoyable. Make room for those actions in your schedule.

3. Take your medications as prescribed. If you have concerns about the drugs you’re taking, talk to your doctor about it. Never reduce or stop taking your medications without first talking to your doctor.

Physical

*Feed your body.* Experts agree you should have at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Balance those with other healthy foods you enjoy.

*Movе your body.* How do you like to work out? In a gym? A walk in the woods? Dancing? Do you play sports?

Rest your body. If you’re not getting eight hours of sleep at night, nap during the day.

Mental

*Engage your mind.* Do you like to read how-to books or watch documentaries? Try a crossword puzzle. What have you always wanted to learn to do? Enroll in a class.

*Change your mind.* Pay attention to the thoughts that may be depressing you. Notice the ones that may be irrational. Get a second opinion if you’re not sure.

*Recharge your mind.* Look for the positive in all things and practice talking about them with others. Look in the mirror and give yourself a pep talk.

Emotional

*Purge your thoughts.* Keep a journal or diary to unload your thoughts. It can be a physical book or on a computer. Don’t want to keep them? Delete them in a symbolic ceremony when you’re done.

*Share your thoughts.* Friends can be great listeners. Talk about what’s on your mind. Your friend can help you see things in a new light.

*Get support for your thoughts.* A mental health professional can help you work through your emotions in a healthy way. They can help you separate the rational from the irrational.
Spiritual

**Focus your spirit.** Search your soul. Discover what gives you a sense of meaning and purpose in life?

**Educate your spirit.** Read uplifting stories or scriptures. Learn new spiritually uplifting activities. Talk to clergy or others who are as spiritually focused as you would like to be.

**Soothe your spirit.** Pray. Meditate. Practice forgiveness.