



5 Tips for Coping with Symptoms of Depression

Depression is a mental illness that is very common. Whether you have been formally diagnosed with depression by a doctor or experience symptoms of depression, it can be hard to follow through with daily responsibilities when you're experiencing a period of depression. According to the **American Psychiatric Association**, "depression causes feelings of sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed. It can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease your ability to function at work and at home."

Some symptoms of depression include:

- Feeling sad or having a depressed mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed
- Changes in appetite — weight loss or gain unrelated to dieting
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Loss of energy or increased fatigue
- Increase in purposeless physical activity (e.g., inability to sit still, pacing, handwringing) or slowed movements or speech (these actions must be severe enough to be observable by others)
- Feeling worthless or constant guilt
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating or making decisions

If you're concerned that you might have depression, it is important to talk to a trusted adult about this. Depression can be treated, but you will likely need help and support from those around you if symptoms of depression last for a long time (2 weeks or more).

If you are experiencing symptoms of depression that are more situational (for example, during the winter we tend to get more emotionally low because of the lack of sunshine, or you might be feeling extra down due to struggles in school or with friends), this resource can help provide tips to support your mental wellness during these trying times.



You, Me and Identity: Understanding Identity

5 Tips:

1. Stay connected with people close to you.

When we're feeling emotionally low or depressed, it can be tempting to isolate ourselves. However, staying connected with others can help get us through these challenging times. It is important to push yourself as much as you can to reach out to others and remain connected during these difficult times.

2. Do things that make you feel good.

This can be as simple as putting on your favourite song or taking a shower. Sometimes these small things can be enough to shift our mood and support our mental wellbeing during these times. It might not seem like much, but it is a great start!

3. Get some sunshine!

The vitamin D we get from being out in the sunshine is scientifically proven to make us feel happier. During winter months or a particularly rainy time, it can be difficult to do this. However, regardless of the weather, even simply getting outside can improve your mood. If the weather isn't allowing for you to get this boost of sunshine, you can always get a [Happy Lamp](#)! These lamps are designed to simulate sunshine and can also help to boost mood.

4. Move your body.

Again, this might not seem like much, but moving your body when you're feeling extremely emotionally low can feel like a big challenge. Doing some simple stretches, going for a walk or doing some low-impact exercise can greatly improve your mood. The endorphins we get from moving our bodies can help our brains when we're feeling low.



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5. Eat foods that make your body feel good.

This will look different for everyone, but knowing which foods make your body and mind feel good and eating those foods when you're feeling down can do a great deal. When we're feeling extremely low, eating at all can pose a challenge. So even if you start small, with a piece of toast or a granola bar, getting food into your body can help support your mind.

If you are experiencing symptoms of depression or have depression and are going through a hard time, there is help. Find someone you trust that you can talk to. Reaching out for help is hard, but it is brave and important.