

Help Yourself

The first thing you can do is get help from your doctor, family, friends or a therapist, but people with depression can do other things to help themselves.

Some simple things can lift your mood, such as exercising every day, eating healthy foods and getting the right amount of sleep. Also, just by being around people who have a positive outlook can lift your spirits. Find an activity you may enjoy doing with a group of people, such as yoga, dance, art, music or writing clubs. If you are on edge when you are in groups, you can draw, listen to music, play with your pet, watch a fun movie, sew or play computer games on your own. Spending too much time alone can make the depression worse, so try to find a balance between being alone and spending time with your family and friends.

Sometimes with depression you can also feel stressed out, nervous or even angry. These feelings can be confusing, but as your depression starts to lift, some of the anxiety and anger will also lessen. If you are feeling too much pressure at school or it takes you longer to do a task because you are nervous or upset, ask your teacher for more time. Talk to your parents or your doctor about what is bothering you. Sometimes just by talking about the anxiety and anger, they become manageable. You can do something about the anxiety by practicing deep breathing exercises, yoga or listening to calming music. Usually some type of physical activity helps with anger. Writing all the reasons for your anger and then ripping the paper up and throwing it away can also help. If neither of these works, ask your doctor or therapist for other suggestions.

Here are some other ideas you can do to restore your mood and lift your depression:

1. **Identify.** Try to decide what may be causing your depression. When did you start feeling down? What was going on at the time? Did anything make it better or worse? Talking to a friend and hearing the words out loud may help you understand depression a little better. Sometimes people have a hard time talking to other people, even if they are friends, but you can still write your feelings down on paper. Just by writing the feelings down, you can see where they began more clearly.
2. **Plan.** When you have thought about how your depression started, you now think about what steps to take to lower your depression. Thinking about it but not taking any steps will not solve your depression. Take action! Set a few goals that are easy and realistic for you. Share the plan with your doctor, your therapist or your family. Look at it every day, but take your time and don't be too hard on yourself. Changes are easier when you break them down into small steps. (See the sample plan below.)
3. **Celebrate.** Don't forget to celebrate when you meet a goal! Reward yourself in some small way and share your success with your doctor, therapist and family. Now move on to the next goal! Be kind and patient with yourself. Think positive and your depression will get better over time.

Problem	Goals	Steps to get to my goal
<p>Example:</p> <p>Tired and no energy</p>	<p>Example:</p> <p>I will have more energy and can do the things I want to do.</p>	<p>Example:</p> <p>I will go to bed at 10 p.m. every night.</p> <p>I will exercise in the morning for 20 minutes before school.</p> <p>I will try not to nap after school by taking the dog for a walk instead.</p>

You can have this information in other languages and formats at no charge to you. You can also have this interpreted over the phone in any language. Call Member Services at **1-888-756-0004**. For TTY, call **1-866-428-7588**.

Quý vị có thể có thông tin này bằng các ngôn ngữ và định dạng khác miễn phí. Quý vị cũng có thể có thông tin này thông dịch ra bất kỳ ngôn ngữ nào qua điện thoại. Xin gọi Dịch vụ Thành viên số **1-888-756-0004**.

Puede obtener esta información en otros idiomas y formatos sin costo. También se le puede interpretar esto por teléfono en cualquier idioma. Llame a Servicios al Miembro al **1-888-756-0004**.

