

5 Steps for Coping with Depression



Here are some steps to help you cope with depression. They work for me and I am hoping they help you.

1. Consider using The Twelve Steps for depression. It is a spiritual program and has some invaluable exercises. You can look up the steps online or pick up a copy of The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

I especially like steps 3, 8, and 11:

Step 3 is “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.” Turning my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand Him affects my intuition and decisions in positive ways.

Step 8 is “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.” This is very important, especially since mania leaves such destruction in my wake.

And step 11 is “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.” If I listen to my Inner Voice, it will usually tell me what the right thing to do is.

2. Pray. Prayers of thanksgiving can keep you satisfied. Prayers of supplication can keep you hopeful. Who or what you pray to is up to you, but it can really help.

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- 3. Meditate.** Meditation quiets your mind and can keep you calm and non-reactive amidst everyday challenges. It is a great way to take a break and feel more peaceful.
- 4. Music Therapy.** Try listening to music even when you don't feel like it. It can lift you up. Sometimes, in a depression, it can be difficult to find the right music, but keep trying. I have a list of 2,100 songs that make me feel good. Consider putting playlists together.
- 5. Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT).** This therapy was developed by Marsha Linehan. There are so many helpful skills in DBT including the acronym ACCEPTS: When you are feeling depressed, shift your mind away from it through Activities; with Contributing; with Comparisons (compare yourself to those less fortunate;) with Opposite Emotions; with Pushing Away; with other Thoughts; and with other Sensations.

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She has been dealing with bipolar disorder for more than three decades and has found coping skills to heal from the manias and depressions.

Diana is the author of *Bipolar Chronicles: From Crazy to Content* available on Amazon.

