



## Depression and Suicide Prevention

### Things that may help prevent depression and suicides

#### Take Action and Make an Action Plan:

By taking action you will feel that you are taking control and in control of the situation. This can also build self-confidence and self-esteem. Think on paper and create an action plan. Go through the following and see how you can include them in your action plan, how you will apply them, and how you think they will help you.

#### Physical exercise helps with stress, anxiety, and depression:

Physical exercise releases chemicals that can help counter the effects of stress and depression. Short (20 minutes) time efficient and high intensity interval training on a tread mill can help and can also be repeated daily. To be able to repeat this training daily the key is not to over exert yourself in one training session. Keep it short and intense so that you are able to recover quickly. This counters the effects of the stress hormone, releasing chemicals, burning the adrenaline and cortisol, pushing blood to the brain, and returning the body to a relaxed state. You should always warm-up the body and heart before intensive exercise. Long distance runners are familiar with the "runners high" which is brought on by the release of endorphins in the brain.

#### Laughter is great medicine:

Laughter releases chemicals, endorphins, in your brain that can help with stress and depression and many people advocate *laughter therapy*. It also lowers the stress hormones and strengthens the immune system. The simple act of smiling releases good chemicals.

#### Smiling and Acceptance (opposite of rejection):

The simple act of smiling releases endorphins in the brain. Both laughter and smiling are contagious. When you smile at someone they usually reciprocate with a smile and this is associated to acceptance and making a connection with someone. It's the opposite of rejection. Smiling also enhances peoples view of you. Some studies show that people who are depressed have weaker smiling muscles and advocate *smiling therapy* in which the person practices making the smiling facial expression with eyes wide open and reaps the same benefits as a normal smile. Try this exercise and see what results you get. Make the smiling expression with eyes wide open for a few seconds and then rub or massage your face and head for several seconds. Do not do this in front of a mirror if you will view yourself negatively and look for flaws. If you do it in front of a mirror while smiling and rubbing your face, think positive and loving thoughts.

#### Get a therapeutic massage:

A therapeutic massage stimulates the skin and is linked to affection. It releases chemicals in your brain, endorphins, and can help with stress, depression, and strengthen your immune system. (*massage therapy* and *touch therapy*) It relaxes muscles, increases blood circulation and lymph flow, and can alleviating pain in migraine sufferers.

#### Condition your mind positively:

One of the symptoms of depression is that you probably have feelings of hopelessness and despair. Your mind can also be conditioned negatively to always see the negative side of things or expect the worse. The opposite is also true. You can condition your mind to think positively or expect positive outcomes. It's not easy at first and does require effort but eventually it can change and become almost automatic where you will be thinking positively instead of negatively. You have a lot of imagination so play the positive imagination game. You may have heard these expressions: look on the bright side, put a positive spin on it or spin it positively. (see also [Conditioning your mind negatively or positively](#))

#### Act Happy (condition your mind happy):

Act the way you want to feel and soon you will feel the way you act. This is common in self confidence building therapies or courses where you are asked to act the part of or like a confident person. You soon develop that skill or behavior which results in the person having more confidence. There is increasing evidence that acting enraged, obsessed, malevolent, or depressed maybe bad for you. Actor Leonard DiCaprio developed obsessive-compulsive disorder while playing Howard Hughes in the block buster The Aviator. This often happens to actors who get "caught up" in the role they play or keep many of the same character traits of the role they played. Heath Ledger who played the Joker in the Batman movie died and was allegedly clinically depressed. If you act having an enraged or angry conversation with someone, you will usually find that your emotions do get engaged even though you are simply acting the part. When you are acting happy, you are thinking happy thoughts that go with the acting role you are playing, so it's like conditioning your mind to be happy. So try acting happy and you can also consider it acting happy therapy.

#### Change your negative self talk to a positive self talk:

If your self talk is negative and you are always criticizing or putting yourself down, you should change this self talk to a more positive one. Try seeing errors and mistakes as a learning experience for example. Something that you can use to learn from and improve on. Many people consider life its self as a learning experience.

#### Visual and Auditory Brain Stimulation (positivity):

You can try listening to classical or new age music while watching your favorite scenic video or using the visualization function on your music player (windows media player, winamp, itunes). Many studies indicate that classical music stimulates the brain in many positive ways, adding the visualization function of your player with many different patterns and colors can also stimulate your brain in positive ways.

#### Listen to calming or uplifting rhythmical music:

There are many positive effects from music and people also advocate that some types of music such as Mozart can also make you smarter by working different regions of the brain. You can also try singing one of your favorite positive and uplifting songs (similar to *positive self talk* and *affirmations*).

#### Get a dose of sun light and bright colors:

*Light therapy* is becoming more popular for seasonal depression. *Light therapy* can also strengthen your immune system.

Getting a dose of bright colors from watching a colorful movie or cartoons can also have positive effects on the brain.

**Positive Visualization:**

Many Professional athletes use positive visualization to practice a perfect performance or outcome in their minds. You can do the same or something similar. Visualize good performances, success, and positive outcomes instead of negative outcomes. Practice recalling positive images of your favorite scenic pictures, using your imagination (ex: calm ocean and beach), positive memories, and positive events or actions (ex: helping friends or people. ex: successful events such as graduations).

**Use positive affirmations:**

Using positive affirmations can change your thinking and subconscious. (similar to *positive self talk*)

**Take steps to build self-esteem (set goals and help others):**

Setting goals, taking action, accomplishments, success, and helping others (how you value yourself and self-worth) can be very rewarding and can help you build self-esteem.

When you complete a task or a major task your brain releases endorphins (happy and feel good hormone). You feel happy and your self-esteem usually also goes up too. When you complete a major task, reward yourself to enhance these feelings and to further condition this habit of setting and accomplishing goals.

**Take Omega 3:**

Omega 3's have beneficial effects on the brain and many research articles also claim that it can prevent or help with depression. They are good for the brain, the heart, prevent cancer, and help you lose weight.

**Get enough or the required sleep and exercise:**

When you are stressed and worried (anxiety) you can suffer from insomnia and insomnia is linked to depression. Sleep deprivation also increases the stress hormone, cortisol, in your body. A person who is sleep deprived brain can look like that of psychotic person's brain in an MRI scan. You can exercise to counteract the effects of stress ([Stress Management](#)). Exercise increases blood flow to your brain, counteracts the stress hormones, cortisol and adrenaline, and releases **endorphins** in your brain, the **feel good and happy hormones**. The result is that you will be more calm, relaxed, and sleep better.

**Take a hot bath with scented oils:**

Taking a hot bath and adding scented oils (*Aromatherapy*) before bed time also relaxes you and your body and should help you sleep better.

**Stay active and preoccupied:**

Stay active by doing house cleaning for example. By staying preoccupied your brain has less time to dwell on dark or negative thoughts. You'll also feel organized and productive and get the positive effects of this feeling. Tidiness has also been know to reduce stress and improve psychological health.

**Socialize and do not Isolate yourself:**

Socializing is therapeutic, works the brain, and makes you smarter. It can also preoccupy you and keep you from dwelling on negative thoughts. The positivity of those you socialize with can also rub off on you. Try to participate in activities and social events that contain comedy and laughter.

**Sex makes you smarter and can also help with depression:**

Sex is linked to affection and pleasure and releases endorphins in the brain. Many studies indicate that it can help with depression and can also make you smarter.

## The Brain is Changed

If you take a brain image of an ordinary person with no signs of any psychological disorders and submit them to psychological harassment for a long period of time the brain image will probably be different and have increased or decreased levels of activity in area's of the brain that are associated to psychological disorders or disease.

Also, as indicated on the stress effects page, one of the effects of long periods of stress is that it kills brain cells.

[amenclinics.com](#) :

"In a similar way, sleep deprivation also decreases brain activity and limits access to learning, memory, and concentration. A recent brain imaging study showed that people who consistently slept less than 7 hours had overall less brain activity. Sleep problems are very common in people who struggle with their thoughts and emotions. Getting enough sleep everyday is essential to brain function.

Scientists have only recently discovered how stress negatively affects brain function. Stress hormones have been shown in animals to be directly toxic to memory centers. Brain cells can die with prolonged stress. Managing stress effectively is essential to good brain function."

"Happy and hopeful thoughts had an overall calming effect on the brain, while negative thoughts inflamed brain areas often involved with depression and anxiety."

"You can train your thoughts to be positive and hopeful or you can just allow them to be negative and upset you. That's right, it's up to you! You can learn how to change your thoughts and optimize your brain."

"Stay away from substances known to be toxic or those that decrease brain activity."

[Magic Mineral Lifts Your Mood](#)

A chemical found in everyday foods may help atypical depression. Duke University scientists found that consuming chromium picolinate, a trace mineral naturally found in whole grains, mushrooms, liver and many other foods, has significant effects on individuals suffering from atypical depression.

[suicide.org](#) - Suicide Prevention Information and Suicide Prevention Hotlines (many countries)

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](#) - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline