

Strategies for Managing Symptoms of Depression

Symptoms of depression can come and go throughout the day and it can be hard to find a way through those feelings. Below are some strategies you can try to work through symptoms of depression and refocus your brain on something else.

- **Stay Active** - 30 minutes of physical activity a day is ideal but even just 10 minutes can help you push through symptoms of depression
- **Eat Well** - avoid high-sugar, high-fat, processed foods, and alcohol
- **Challenge the Distortions** - when you find yourself having negative thoughts or emotions, challenge them! Ask yourself “is this accurate”, “does it help to think this way?”, “Is there evidence to support this thought?”
- **Reduce Procrastination** - this can promote a sense of self-efficacy and accomplishment
- **Stay Connected** - while it may be difficult, talking to those you are close with and staying connected to them can help you process what you are feeling and help remember that you are not alone.

- **Journal** - writing down negative thoughts and feelings can be a great form of self-expression and help you process through those feelings. Another way to use your journal is to *reflect on gratitude*. Create a list in your journal of all of the things in your life that make you happy or that you are thankful for. Creating this list can help your brain focus on all of the good things life has to offer.
- **Set Daily Goals** - choose small activities that you want to accomplish at the beginning of each day and celebrate the small successes when you complete each task
- **Engage in Joyful Activities With Others** - choose activities that you enjoy and that make you excited and complete them with those you love
- **Practice Self-Compassion** - being overly harsh or critical of yourself will only magnify the symptoms of depression. Try to give yourself lots of grace and kindness
- **Seek Professional Help** - if these strategies don't work or if your depressive thoughts and feelings intensify, it may be time to seek help from a medical professional. There is no shame in seeking help. Be proud of the fact that you recognize that you need more than these strategies to get through the day.