

DEPRESSION STRATEGIES

Even if the major source of your depression is external to you, you can influence the way you feel. Use these strategies in a **preventative** way by practicing them when depression is not so severe and in an **immediate** way when you feel your mood going down.

EMOTIONAL SKILLS	PHYSICAL	THOUGHTS	YOUR 5 MOST USEFUL STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Track your mood • Identify primary emotions – contain useful information • Acceptance of emotions • Allow waves of emotion to pass • Practice emotional regulation and tolerance skills • Face difficult emotions • Tolerance of uncertainty • Identify when emotional memories and reactions are being triggered • Compassion to self • Transform emotions with emotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of physical response to emotions • Exercise, sport • Diet • Relaxation & sleep • Biofeedback • Complementary medicine • Yoga, Tai Chi • Martial Arts • Skills to reduce physiological arousal • If nothing on this table works, or your depression is very severe, medication may help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of thought patterns and how they link to emotions • Counter negative self-talk • Meditation & mindfulness • Communicate with different parts of yourself • Become an expert about your emotions • Research depression online • Accept your imperfections 	<p>Add your strategies here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • •
VALUES	STRENGTHS & SUPPORTS	ACTIONS	WHAT TO TRY NOT TO DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify personal values • Identify life goals • Meaning and purpose • Belonging • Spirituality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and use your strengths • Identify your support people and social activities • Practice asking for and accepting support • Talk to a therapist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to action based on values • Reduce stress • Self care & self-soothing • Connect with others • One step at a time • Prioritise life goals • Attend to responsibilities and daily tasks • Manage boundaries with others • Do things you enjoy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify unhelpful coping strategies • Too much alcohol or drugs • Too much avoidance • Becoming immobile • Reject feelings • Too critical of self • Impulsive decisions with negative consequences

If you are having suicidal thoughts, tell someone. Ask for help. <http://www.beyondblue.org.au> <http://www.lifeline.org.au> [North West Mental Health Triage](#)

These strategies have been compiled from multiple sources. Some key references are: Emotion-Focused Therapy for Depression (2004) Greenberg & Watson; The Mindful Way Through Depression (2007). Williams, Teasdale, Segal, & Kabat-Zinn; ACT for Depression (2007). Zettle.