

**What helps you when you're feeling depressed?**  
**What are your top tips for living with depression?**

The following list has been generated by the 35 people who have come on the *Black Dog: Understanding Depression* Course that has run three times in Shrewsbury over the past few years and has been facilitated by Guy Holmes and other Psychologists.

**Helpful self-talk**

I remind myself that *I will get over it*

Every time I spiral down I now remind myself that *It is a spiral not the same pit I always fall into – time moves on and so do I*

Being gentle with myself and reminding myself that *I have value in 'being' not 'doing' – you are what you are, not what you do*

I try to get a wider perspective, by drawing a dot in the middle of a piece of paper and imagining I'm looking down on my head

Try to think positively

I've found it helpful to not put myself under too much pressure, and to be able to say no or to cancel things without feeling overwhelmingly guilty

Saying *I didn't ask for this*

Positive thinking, and challenging negative thoughts

Challenge thoughts containing words "should" "ought to" "must" "have to" etc. and recognize you have choices. It's ok to take time out and just *be*

Saying to myself *It will pass*

**Therapies**

Alternatives to conventional treatments can be very useful – massage, reflexology, and other physical and non physical therapies

Alternative therapies e.g. Aromatherapy

Medication

Relaxation and visualization

*Outlook* organization (self help for depression)

**Activities**

Plan the week ahead

It is helpful to have something planned and something to look forward to

Having at least one thing to do every day – trying not to have a blank day in my diary

Have a routine

Re-engaging in activities you once enjoyed e.g. music and theatre; this allows you to hope

Trying something new

Swimming

Cycling or doing something that has a simple rhythm – you do something requiring energy, get hungry, eat, rest, then cycle again

Baking

Spoil myself

**Nature**

Being in the countryside – Nature is the soul's place

Walking

Be near running water – shower, waterfall

Get to a high place – go up the Long Mynd

### **Making sense of what is going on**

When I feel depressed or think of depression I also try to think of repression and oppression...What am I repressing? Who or what is oppressing me? Am I oppressing myself? How have I been oppressed in the past and how is this affecting me now?

Recognising that there are lots of different theories and ideas about why we feel depressed, lots of different ways of dealing with things, and lots of different things to draw on

Notice anger in myself

Recognise symptoms and underlying causes e.g. fear of death

### **Getting away**

It's important to find an escape route from people or things that are hurting you

Getting some personal space

Escape from pressure

Take a day off

Having time and space for me

*You don't have to put yourself through it*

### **Being with people; communicating and expressing things**

Being with people who have had similar experiences

Being with people who have been depressed and understand what I am going through

Getting out and mixing with people

Being needed

Being with my son

Help someone else

Family and friends

Talk to my mental health nurse

Go to church

Try and communicate

Express anger

### **Miscellaneous**

Not feeling oppressed by *having to work*

Chocolate

Playing – e.g. with a remote control tractor

Playing *Hide and Seek*

Books

Wisdom cards

Pets

Finding somewhere where you fit in, that sustains self-worth and is meaningful

**Hopefully you might find some of these helpful. If you have your own that are not on the list why not write them down and leave them with the secretaries at South Shrewsbury CMHT or email them to me at [guy.holmes@nhs.net](mailto:guy.holmes@nhs.net)**

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