

10 Factors That Can Throw You Into Depression

As someone who has had to face depression and overcome it, I've also helped many press through the storms that depression can bring and develop a strategy for climbing to solid ground.

Losing your emotional sense of well being can be an incredibly frightening and challenging experience. Millions are presented with this oppressive monster and the numbers are rising. If we don't understand how to process people through it, many will live with a hopelessness that life can never get better outside of depression.

Although I break down the subject of depression in my *Healing and Freedom from the Inside Out* training series, I have also found there to be some critical factors that contribute to any person's battle with depression. I have studied and observed in real life scenarios some very common influences and factors that contribute to depression.

Being aware of these can help us gain some leverage to walk into greater freedom:

1. Continual discouragement – One of our greatest weapons for daily victory is hope. As believers, we have a hope that will not fail, but we can often find ourselves being discouraged because our hope was hard wired to something that was not stable. Instead of maintaining a big picture of hope that never fails, we often get lost in putting all our hopes and dreams into something temporal and unsatisfying.

When a human is continually bombarded with disappointments regarding hopes we've hinged onto, our biology can be conditioned into crashing emotionally. We feel we just can't take it anymore. We lose any desire to keep hope alive and look forward to life. The pain of disappointment becomes

so intense, we choose to turn off the hope switch in our hearts. Being disappointed is just too painful. But we have to realize we centered our hope on something that cannot stand the test of storms.

2. Finding an identity in what you do – I find this one to be one of the most influential factors in contributing to depression. Our current culture bases our core identity on a role we fulfill or something we accomplish. There are two things that are important to understand in this.

Who we are is not WHAT we do. So many live their life where their self-esteem and feelings of worth are based on how well they perform in life or how results turn out from their efforts. Because society bases identity so much on successful results, people put all their eggs into this basket. But when a career doesn't work out or a performance doesn't have the results we hope for, our sense of worth plummets.

Performance based living causes us to connect our worth and identity to what we did, how well we did it and the outcomes. This causes us to see failures and mistakes as labels on who we are. Failures are a part of life, but if our identity is not secure, we will see ourselves as failures.

We mistake a role for our identity. I have coached a lot of moms who get trapped in this. They confuse their core identity as being a mom, when in God's eyes, their core identity is a daughter of God. Being a mom is a role, but it is not the central aspect of who you are. If the core identity is not attended to, then when the kids grow up and leave the home; or your children don't make great decisions, your sense of identity collapses.

This applies to all arenas of life. Your core identity is not a business owner, dad, pastor, committee chairman or CEO. Those are roles that you fulfill in life. They are very important roles, but they cannot be confused as the core of

who you are. In our desire to find worth, we can find ourselves getting lost in the pursuit of success in a role. In this, we sacrifice investing into what it means to be a child of God.

3. Comparison – If you compare yourself with any other human being, you are destined to be discouraged. Nothing will demoralize a heart like that of comparing yourself to someone else's traits and life. You lose the uniqueness of who you are and your story.

God does not call each person to be like each other. Your call is to be like Christ, but it has a powerful expression on this planet that is unique to your thumbprint. Comparing your journey, struggles and experiences to others will always lead to a negative outcome.

Either you will temporarily feel better in comparison to someone else or you will find yourself hearing the accusations of failure in your mind.

4. Neglecting the life of the heart – Life is so busy. I find this to be a massive tool of destruction to spread in the lives of people. Our daily schedule and responsibilities do not create a healthy grid for heart cultivation.

Most people do not have the heart investment to handle what they jump into each day. We think we can skip times of solitude, exercise, prayer and worship to just go about our daily tasks. We wonder why our hearts are numb, checked out, exhausted and burned out. When our hearts become weary without tending to what the heart is crying out for, we can find ourselves in deep patterns of depression.

5. Depression in your family line – It's a known fact that depression can run in family lines. If you have it in your generations, odds are you have had to confront depression at some point in your life. This is the work of the enemy in the family line to compound depression with increasing levels so

that family lines become more debilitated by its work. Your assignment is to overcome what was not defeated in your family line. The good news is that you can say, "It ends here."

6. Chronic anxiety – Proverbs shows us that anxiety in the heart will lead to depression (Proverbs 12:25). When your heart has been continually bombarded with worry, anxious thoughts, pressures and all sorts of fear related battles, eventually depression can find its way in. One becomes so overwhelmed with their anxious battles that hopelessness sets in. The person wonders whether or not they can ever get free. Anxiety has become a long term presence.

Constant stress and fear related thoughts must be cast down. Otherwise depression will tag team to discourage us from ever getting free.

7. A non-encouraging environment – You can never expect to get free of depression without changing the atmosphere you cultivate. One of my instructions in coaching people out of depression is to shift their environment. How they wake up, what they listen to, friends they give heart access to, teachings they listen to, books they read, habits they cultivate and routines they follow all need to come into alignment for breaking free from depression.

This means that a whole new way of self-talk needs to be implemented. New words, encouraging declarations and hope-filled discussions need to be a part of the daily recipe. Negative people need to be kept at bay. You may need to stop watching the news and eliminating certain triggers that only enhance your sense of hopelessness.

8. Unhealed anger – Whatever pain or brokenness is not addressed and healed will become pent up toxicity within a person. Without a release valve for healing, anger becomes a bitter pool of hopelessness. That anger can drive a person into a negative and hopeless state of depression.

9. Lack of nurture – Nurture is our ability to receive comforting love during time of hardship. It helps us get back into the game with a new resolve and fresh outlook. A lack of nurture is devastating to the body's chemical state. There is a key component of love the mother brings to the household. It is the love of nurture. This is the recovery and comfort aspect of love. Nurture puts a Band-Aid on wounds and comforts. When a child is having a hard day, if they are nurtured well, they grow up able to recover from disappointment and heartache. If not, they will struggle to deal with many of life's challenges.

When sitting down with people to work on mood issues, I often find there exists a common root component in the area of mother issues, leading to a lack of nurture. People lose their ability to live optimistically and they do not know how to carry optimism and daily hope.

Life deals us situations we never knew were coming. We face pain we never planned for. Outcomes occur in our life we never planned for. This is why the ability to nurture ourselves into hope is so important. If not, we will develop a tendency for self-pity and despair, rather than resilience and tenacity.

10. A poor diet and sedentary life – Sometimes the best thing we need to stabilize our mood is to get our body moving. Exercise has been shown in studies to at times be as effective, if not more effective than antidepressants.

When going through hell, sometimes you just need to get moving and keep moving.

I encourage people who struggle with any mood disorder or mental illness battle to immediately start changing how they eat. It is a fact that many of the processed foods, artificial ingredients and sugar laden foods are mind and mood altering. Eating foods that are not best for your body will alter your chemistry, so having a poor diet, along with not

moving on a daily basis can contribute to depression and keep us there.

When we are depressed, the last thing you need is toxic food to further bog down your system. What you need is care for recovery. Eating well can lead work alongside your spiritual deliverance to make you well.

Mark DeJesus has been equipping people in a full time capacity since 1995, serving in various roles, including, teaching people of all ages, communicating through music, authoring books, leading and mentoring. Mark's deepest love is his family; his wife Melissa, son Maximus and daughter Abigail. Mark is a teacher, author and mentor who uses many communication mediums, including the written word, a weekly radio podcast show and videos. His deepest call involves equipping people to live as overcomers. Through understanding inside out transformation, Mark's message involves getting to the root of issues that contribute to the breakdown of our relationships, our health and our day-to-day peace. He is passionately reaching his world with a transforming message of love, healing and freedom. Out of their own personal renewal, Mark and Melissa founded Turning Hearts Ministries, a ministry dedicated to inside out transformation. Mark also founded Transformed You, a communication platform for Mark's teachings, writing and broadcasts that are designed to encourage people in their journey of transformation.

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