

5 Radical but Effective Depression Cures

I read a disturbing statistic in *U.S. News and World Report* the other day: Anti-depressant drugs are the most widely prescribed class of drugs in the U.S. now, with prescription rates almost doubling between 1996 and 2005.

It is sad that so many people suffer from depression when the source of healing is readily available. I was once one of the people in this category.

Depression robs you of hope. It comes from constant meditation on what you've lost or what you lack, real or perceived. It can be from your past, present or imagining what might happen in the future. But if you are in Christ, you have the very source of wholeness and the reason for hope. He is able to heal the loss, make you whole and restore your hope. But for this to occur, you must fellowship with him daily; it can't be a "Sunday-only, sometime-y" thing.

In my prayer time, God revealed to me radical steps to take that combat mild depression. If you are struggling with this issue, please take them to heart. Practice these steps every day. Your depression will lift, and joy will fill you with strength, helping you face each day's challenges with grace.

1. Radical prayer. If you don't have a regular prayer life, then make that a priority. And if you don't a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, then learn how you can here.

For those who do have that relationship, set a regular time to communicate with God first thing in the morning. Arrange your bedtime and morning routine so you can have this time. This is critical, because depression saps your energy and distorts your thinking. You must replace your weakness with God's

strength to be effective in combating its assault.

In your prayer time every morning, start by sitting in quietness. Breathe deeply; don't launch into telling God about your problems just yet. Instead purpose in your heart to focus on praise and worship so that you can enter into His presence with thanksgiving. As you wait in quietness for God's strength to fill you, meditate on His goodness and what He has done for you. Meditate on His character. Recall stories from the Bible in which people faced seemingly impossible situations and God came through for them (My favorite is Moses and the Red Sea Crossing—Exodus Chapter 14).

The more you relax, breathe and focus on God's strength and power, the more your spirit will quicken and leap. Your faith will stir, and you will feel strong in spirit. Keep waiting and meditating until this happens. It is from this position of humility and God-supplied strength and power that you make your requests known to God. His peace will fill you, and you will be confident that He will perfect that which concerns you. End your prayer time with praise and thanksgiving, just as you started. Be consistent with this practice and watch radical changes occur in how you face the day.

2. Radical focus. Guarding that which you see, hear and speak is critical. If you are regularly watching the news but not spending any time with God, you will naturally be more depressed. In Philippians 4:8 we are reminded: "Whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

Since news reports are usually not good reports, change your routine so you fill your mind with good news. Read the book of Psalms for comfort and the book of John to learn more about the good news of the Gospel.

If you are concerned about missing the weather and the traffic report, you can get the weather report on or watch only the traffic report (most news programs have a regular time in which they air the traffic report).

Finally, be sure the words you speak to yourself are of good report. Speak of those things you are hoping for and not what you fear or lack.

3. Radical praise. I read an interesting viewpoint from a psychiatrist about neurotic disorders. He said every patient with such a disorder nearly always had a habit of fault-finding. No matter what was good in their lives, they always focused on what was wrong and what was lacking.

The antidote for that habit is to become a person of praise. For the next 30 days, consciously think of seven things every day that you want to praise God for. It could be as simple as having breath in your lungs or getting a green light if you are late for an appointment. To make this even more powerful, write down your seven praiseworthy things in a small notebook. I guarantee your entire perspective will change after consistent 30-day practice.

4. Radical pursuit. Resolve to put God first and make study of his Word a regular practice. Pursue righteousness, peace and joy. Remember, if you are in Christ, you are given free access to God and can come boldly to his throne of grace. What an awesome privilege! He sees you clothed in Christ's righteousness. If you have areas of disobedience in your life, confess them in your prayer time. Willfully doing what you know is contrary to God's Word can also be a contributor to depression. Ask for forgiveness and turn away from your error immediately. God is ready, willing and able to restore you to fellowship.

Humbly ask God if there is sin in your life, to cleanse you from it and to give you the strength to do what is right. Ask

him to fill the space left behind with more of Him. Be willing to ask as many times as you need to until your breakthrough comes, confident that God will answer your prayer.

5. Radical action. Finally, if you are depressed about a situation from the past, you will need to ask God to fix it, because you cannot change the past. He can help you forgive any hurts you need to forgive. If you need healing, He can do that too.

If you are depressed about your present and future, ask yourself: Is there something that I can do about this situation right now? Write down any actions you can take to change your situation for the better or at least glorify God in your attitude towards it.

Then, take immediate action on one of the items on your list. Action will give you power and energy. Keep acting on the things that you can change.

Regarding the parts of your situation you can't change, go back to the radical prayer step: Start in quietness, focusing on thanksgiving and praise to God. Wait on Him to fill you with strength. Once you feel your spirit built up, tell him your concerns in confidence. End with prayer and thanksgiving.

I do pray that you take these steps to combat depression. And even if you aren't depressed, these radical steps will still bring radical joy and peace into your life. {eo}

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify of God's healing power to end binge eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

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