



WHAT IS SITUATIONAL DEPRESSION?

Situational depression, unlike chemical depression, can be identified or attached to a person's life-situation.

There are many situations that individuals face, which may cause them to be temporarily depressed.

For example, a recent happening or from a childhood experience, such as the loss of a relative, close friend, job, or any major disappointment which can lead to situational depression.

Additionally situational depression can come about due to any life change such as divorce, facing an illness, relocation, cuts in income, assault (both emotional and physical), or the absence of people who were intimate to your daily life.

Situational depression can in some cases stay with the person and may cause a chemical change in the system.

While therapy and medication are important keys to controlling depression, a combination of positive behavioral steps and constructive thinking can fight depression on their own or in combination with medical intervention.

- Judie Cotton, LMFT

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TIPS FOR DEALING WITH SITUATIONAL DEPRESSION



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TIPS Here are some tips that you can use to fight situational depression.



All of them are **ENTIRELY** in your control. As hard as it seems at times, it is your attitude that can make the greatest difference in the fight against depression.

1. SET A ROUTINE FOR YOUR DAY EACH DAY.

Waking up with an empty calendar can leave you disoriented. The feeling of “lounging around” when others are active contributes to depression. Set a routine to read, study, meet other people get up and out each day.

2. SET AN EXERCISE ROUTINE.

No matter what other reasons you may have for exercising, one hour of walking, preferably outside, several times a week is all that is necessary to improve mental health. If possible join others and share ideas and thoughts.

3. CHALLENGE NEGATIVE THINKING WITH LOGIC.

In fighting depression most of the work is mental. Using logic to confront negative thinking patterns allows you to block them and/or refute them. Take a break from the negative thinking. Often a therapist is needed to help you challenge the negative thinking and point out truth from the fiction.

4. REACH OUT TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

Social connections are vital for fighting depression. This does not mean that you dump all your negative thoughts on them, nor does it mean that you can expect one or two people to be in charge of cheering you. Those who honestly want to help you will persist in encouraging you to make positive choices that lead you to health.

5. SET YOURSELF ON A NUTRITIONALLY SOUND DIET.

Your brain is part of your body, so treat it like everything else. Do not overload on sweet foods, carbohydrates and do not use alcohol. Alcohol is a depressant. Healing from depression is a physiological process and maintaining a healthy diet and drinking sufficient water helps speed the healing process.

6. GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP.

Good sleep is often accomplished with sufficient daily activity, exercise, and fresh air. It is important to pay attention to your natural biorhythms. Learning your body's sleep needs and adjusting to them is a big help in fighting depression and a boost to all bodily systems.



7. SET REASONABLE GOALS AND BE RESPONSIBLE.

Nothing feels as good as accomplishing a goal that you have set for yourself. You need to fight against the tendency to pull back from responsibilities when you are depressed. Staying active and meeting your responsibilities or taking on new ones will help fight depression. Even small steps towards a goal are big steps in fighting depression.

8. DEPRESSION TRAINS YOU TO BE DEPRESSED.

If not treated, recognized, and dealt with, you begin to think that finding something pleasurable in life is no longer possible. This is a learned attitude and can be unlearned! Force yourself to do new things and take part in activities with others – the act of doing will help fight the depression. Getting away from the depressive or negative thinking for a short period is positive and since you did it once you can repeat it. **It is a choice.**

Fighting both situational and chemical depression is a war that is waged day-to-day using the suggestions below. Changing your attitude can be the first step. **You are in control and you have choices.** This is **always** true, small steps and positive choices repeated over time are empowering and lead to actual change. Day after day, repeating any action or behavior creates a habit. **Bad habits are destructive and contribute to depression – good habits are constructive and lead to a positive attitude away from depression.** Make a leap of faith to choose life, joy, and positive thinking. It is sometimes difficult yet possible.