

The Anti-Depressant Tablet



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+ A SELF-HELP PAPER FOR PERSONS WANTING A WAY OUT OF THEIR DEPRESSION+

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HELEN'S WAY OUT

Great!

I remember being very sad when I was very young but I didn't understand this to be depression but a lot of times I wasn't happy to be living. I suffered on and off with depression all through school. There was always that depression. I went onto adulthood feeling the same way. When I got married I never thought that I could raise my children as good as they should be brought up. As I got older my depression got worse. And finally as life went on and the older ones in my life passed on and my Mother whom I leaned on passed on, I got worse and worse. It seemed that I always knew that someone would be there for me. Through my life I would hang on to the Higher Power and let go and hang on to it and then let go and then this went on all through my life. I was always to be determined to be in control. I guess I thought that if I was in control -- complete control -- then the feeling that I wasn't quite good as someone else would pass. I never was satisfied with myself and I always thought I could do better. I never could do it good enough. I felt I always had to be perfect.

"I had a great need
to be in control.
When I was in control
I didn't feel so
weak anymore."

I never expected this from others but I always expected so much from me. I also spent a whole lot of unhappy years in that unhappy struggle with me and the inner battle that went on and on.

The last one that played a big part in my life was my Mother. My Mother talked about things and we could sit down and talk. Life was made simple by her. After she was gone I completely fell apart. Not right away but it took a while. I got more and more depressed and I was too scared to go out and find help. At first I didn't know if there was any or not, but I

was too scared -- but what in the world would they think of me. Who would accept me. No one could help me unless they could accept me and this scared me to death.

I would go to work and then come home. My children all left home and got married and I was divorced from my husband. I came home to an empty house. I didn't like anything that made a sound. I didn't like the TV, or use the VCR. I just wanted to SAD myself. I was thinking all the old negative thoughts that were making me so sick. I started to get chest pains. Why should you go and take up a doctor's time and you are not even worth it. The doctor couldn't find anything except that I was terribly depressed.

In the daytime it was pretty good - the time I came home and when it became nighttime I just sat in the dark and it was a comfort. I couldn't find a positive thought. I couldn't find one. "I could do better on the job," I kept repeating to myself or "you shouldn't have done this or that."

**" I WAS THINKING ALL
THOSE OLD NEGATIVE
THOUGHTS THAT WERE
MAKING ME SICK. "**

I beat myself over the head and this went on for two or three years. I didn't want to see people. People came to my home and I didn't want to see them and I would say I'm fine and I couldn't feel better. I kept this all locked up inside me. They would reject me if they really find out the real me. I wanted to tell this story of mine to someone but no one would want to listen. After two years I knew that my body would not take any more and I had to find someone to help me. I looked at my old phone book and saw a note that said DEPRESSION CENTER and Hugh Smith answered on the other end. This is a bunch of crock -- he couldn't possibly have time to visit with me. I had a terrible fight going that first time -- but I thank God that I did go and I wanted to change so bad. I do think people have to want to get better. I didn't go in with the attitude that maybe I would get better or maybe I wouldn't get better. I was going to go in and get better. I started to get rid of some of my old negative thoughts and I started to feel better.

Some weeks after that we started group counseling which led into the DEPRESSED ANONYMOUS group -- I finally got rid of those negative thoughts and I got rid of them one at a time. I needed the people to open a new world for me so that I can be happy again. Many times in the beginning I heard the old voice that repeated "you are stupid, who is going to help you?" But I kept going to the meetings and I felt I could find something from the people where I found something I could use. I found people who accepted me and who said that they knew exactly what I was feeling. I began to really trust in the Higher Power. The more I turned it over to the Higher Power and said I couldn't do this by myself the more I believed that this was going to happen and I started believing in my Higher Power and I started believing in me and I never felt alone and I felt that I was somebody and that whatever I set out in life to do I could do. There was that Higher Power there who would be there for me. The chest pains went away and I began to sleep again. I have learned over the period of a year

that you can get well. You don't get well over night -- but you do get well and you do get better.

I was down in the muck and I had used up all the hiding places in my life and now I lay down to sleep and I still have many problems like any one else but if I need sleep I hand it over to the Higher Power and I go to sleep. I can always pick it up in the morning and I can deal with it then and nothing awful has happened to me yet.

My Higher Power has never been more powerful in my life than now. It is there for all of us if we just reach out and get it. To look back at the person that I was and the person that I am now I am a different person all together. That was a very sad person and I am so thankful for the DA group. The DA group has become as important as my own family, and my church family. It is a wonderful feeling to know that there is a Higher Power to help you through these things. At first I thought that whenever anybody in counseling was talking about the Higher Power and how it let you have peace in your life I doubted that very much but then it happened to me.

Every few days the world jumps on you and gets you down but that is life. There is that extra strength that I have that I didn't have before. I always believe that everything is going to be Ok and it is the first time that I have peace. I know how the new DA members are feeling cause I have been there myself. But through the long months and weeks of work it will work for them too. There is no magic pill, or magic wand that does it, it is a long process and it does happen. It is so much better than staying in the dark hole. I was never at peace with me. I was always beating myself up. But without the Higher Power I was not able to deal with life. I also had to get all my priorities straight. I was putting my priorities on what others would think or what someone else might say. I was afraid to change that. I was afraid I would turn into a person who would be thoughtless and uncaring. But it didn't happen that way. I discovered a different way to go about it. I did the best I could. It used to bother me and give me a lot

**" In getting my priorities
straight my depression
got better. "**

of grief why someone wouldn't accept me. I will be the best that I can every day of my life but I will do the best I can -- if someone can't accept that then that is too bad. If I waste my life getting everyone else's approval and disapprove of myself and disapprove of you too that is no good. I wanted everyone else's approval. You can't please everybody. I wasn't taking care of myself. So that contributed to my depression. But now I know that I contributed a lot to my own depression but I will live the best I know how. But I will never deliberately hurt anyone else but I am going to take care of me too." [Excerpted and edited from DEPRESSED? HERE IS A WAY OUT! Hugh Smith. HarperCollins, London, 1990.]

DEPRESSED ANONYMOUS SIXTH STATEMENT OF BELIEF

Keep physically fit!!! It is a must for us, who are and who have been depressed. Walking not only restores harmony to the body it likewise restores my self-esteem and self-confidence.

One of the major areas to remember when someone says that they are depressed is to try to get them to do some physical exercise. So many times when we are depressed we are listless and lacking energy for any task or type of activity that at one time in our lives might have caused us to be happy and productive. When we are depressed we just want to lie down and sleep. We feel that we have no mastery over our life, thoughts and future. What we forget is that this is the nature of depression in that we believe there is no use to get active because we won't like what we are going to do anyway. But when we are depressed we know that our body's metabolism slows down and we lose interest in most activities that previous to our depression brought us some happiness.

Mastery is what we regain when we force ourselves to get out of bed, get going and start walking on a regular basis.

When I was going through my depression I forced myself every morning to go to the mall and walk a good number of miles each morning. The jittery feeling was still there but I kept at it and gradually I began to feel less jittery and less hopeless that my life would change.

This belief that motivation follows action is especially designed for those persons who are depressed and feel they neither have any mastery over their lives or an interest in former pleasant activities.

MOTIVATION FOLLOWS ACTION

Topic possibilities

It is only when we get physically active and move out of our sad ruminations, which like a closed loop, keep circling through our minds. These thoughts cause us to continue to spiral down and continue to feel out of control.

When you start to regularly get involved with a work-out and/or exercise program, designed specifically for yourself your mood will begin to change. The change is almost imperceptible but it is there. The trouble with most people is that they want to feel better right now. What has taken months, possibly years to develop into what seems to be an ongoing chronic depressed state may disappear only with time, work and walking..

GETTING THROUGH THE ANGER

"A crucial part of my being a person in my own right was to recognize and express my anger. This anger was initially directed against circumstances which had forced me as a small child into the passive protest position of depression. I remained locked into this for many years. Recognition and expression of anger released me from those defences, and allowed me to begin to act autonomously."

[Excerpted from Rippere, V., and Williams, Ruth. Wounded Healers. New York: John Wiley and Sons Ltd., 1985. p.86-87.]

HOW TO-----GET DEPRESSED! !

"So, if you have never been depressed and you would like to try it out, this is what you do.

You must hold these six beliefs, but you must hold them totally, without doubt or question, as Axiomatic Truths, Laws of the Universe, Absolute Verities of Nature.

The six beliefs are:

1. No matter how good I appear to be, I am bad, evil, unacceptable to myself and to other people.
2. Other people are such that I fear, hate, and envy them.
3. Life is terrible and death is worse.
4. Only bad things have happened to me in the past and only bad things will happen to me in the future.
5. Anger is evil.
6. Never forgive, and never expect to be forgiven.

THE HANDBOOK OF

DEPRESSION, 1991, Dr. Dorothy Rowe, London, Collins, p. 89.

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WOMEN AND DEPRESSION: Risk Factors and Treatment Issues. Final Report of the American Psychological Association's National Task Force on Women and Depression. 1990.

* Specific life events and circumstances are correlated with depression in both genders, but are more likely to be experienced by women. For example, individuals who have less education, low income, low socioeconomic status, and are unemployed are at higher risk for depression. Women are disproportionately found in these categories compared with men. Thus, gender may operate in an indirect manner, through channeling women into social and environmental contexts that themselves are risk factors for depression. The Task Force focused on two critical, but neglected areas for understanding women's depression: victimization and poverty.

Victimization in interpersonal relationships is a significant risk factor in the development of depressive symptomatology in women. What is presented clinically as depressed mood may be long-standing posttraumatic responses to experiences of intimate violence and victimization, for example childhood sexual or physical abuse, marital or acquaintance rape, women battering, sexual harassment in the workplace, or sexual abuse by a therapist or health care provider. The contribution of these factors to rates of depressive symptomatology in women has been neglected, partly because victimization histories in most psychiatric patients tend to be ignored or conceptualized as the source of a disordered personality rather than as depressive symptomatology... Base rates for victimization experiences are higher for women than for men. Survey research in nonclinical populations has found rates of childhood sexual assault ranging from 21.7% to 37% among women, with significantly lower rates being seen among men. These figures may be an underrepresentation of the extent of physical and/or sexual abuse of women. Battering by an intimate partner may occur in the lives of as many as 25% to 50% of women; again rates of battering of men are significantly lower. Estimates of marital and acquaintance rape suggests that 12-14% of all women have suffered these forms of assault.

p.31

In unhappy marriages, women are three times as likely as men to be depressed than married men and single women. Mothers of young children are highly vulnerable to depression: the more children in the house, the more depression is reported.

*Way to
must to
approach*

Good!

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HOW TO WORK THE 12 STEP PROGRAM

When someone new comes to a DA meeting they will hear a lot about people in the group working the 12 steps. What this means is that since the group of people are into working the 12 steps they intend to live out what the 12 steps mean.

The first step that all of us made when we walked through the door into our first DA meeting was our admission that we were helpless over our depression.

We need to admit that at the present time our will power is powerless over this constant sadness and empty feeling that we have been carrying around most of our lives. We just need to talk to someone who will understand us and respect us and not tell us to "snap out of" our depression.

Working the 12 steps means reading all we can about the 12 steps and how these steps relate to my own sense of aloneness and sadness. The DA manual DEPRESSED? HERE IS A WAY OUT! is specifically designed to help the depressed person and each step is treated with its own chapter.

In order to have a change of feelings we have to work the steps, which means putting them into practice in all our daily affairs. It also means that we have to try and live out the message of the steps one day at a time.

A person needs to go down each step and reflect on how that particular step speaks to one's own life. If a step that we are studying is unclear as to how it applies to us then we need to bring that up in a group session so that other members can share how that step has been applied to their lives. Sometimes persons who have been in recovery for a long time have more experience with the steps and they can share how this or that step has helped them. We know that at the DA meetings there are people there who are each at different levels of the understanding of the steps.

Step four and five really have to be faced head-on if our depression is to go away. Step four and five are all about cleaning house. We must square off with ourselves and begin the rooting out processes that will in time free us from our sadness and our identity as a depressed person. So often a person depressed is afraid, panic stricken really, in facing some issues that were never their fault in the first place.

It is possible that our anger hasn't as yet been released over some things that have been done to us as children.

Step twelve talks about practicing these principles in all our affairs - that means exactly what it says - we have to practice these steps day after day. We have to say I'm sorry as soon as I am aware that I have said or done something that is out of the way. We again need to study each step, tear it apart and get every ounce of truth from the step and write down how each of these steps has special application for my life. We also need the

This fifth step is all about cleaning house - our house - not our neighbor's house, nor our spouses' house - nor our associates house. This step is a natural for all of us who have just completed a fearless and moral inventory. If we don't clean out all the reasons why we seek our solace and comfort in depression and sad thoughts we will not be able to experience the world in any fashion as a good and cheerful place to live out our lives.

"We must see ourselves as we really are. If we are ever sad about people we have hurt or even more so angry about people who have hurt us over the years then we need to get this out into the open. We also need to share the anger inside of us that has been swallowed for so many years and which likewise needs to get expressed. We need to get in touch with the feelings of rage that have been under our tight control over the years. So many times we have felt that if we ever let go of our rage it would fling us completely out of control and we would experience complete annihilation....

Others in the Depressed Anonymous group will also help you see that you can blame all you want the other people in your life for your problems but it is only when you no longer see yourself as VICTIM that you can stand up and say that you no longer choose to stay depressed..."

[Excerpted from DEPRESSED? HERE IS A WAY OUT! Hugh Smith. 1991 Harper Collins, London, pp. 40-41.]

Most times when we are depressed we have come to falsely believe that since my depression is some sort of biochemical illness I am not responsible for it and so I can't do anything about it anyway. [ED.]

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WHAT MAKES SELF-HELP WORK?

"The self-help and mutual aid movement is a response to a number of different factors in our society which make human services unavailable and unresponsive to those who need them; the pervasiveness of technology and its rate of development - the complexity and size of institutions and communities, with their accompanying depersonalization and dehumanization; the alienation of people from one another, from their communities and even from themselves; and the professionalization of much which in the past was done by individuals for themselves or for one another. Self-help groups have made major contributions toward dealing with problems which cannot be dealt with by other institutions in the society, and at the same time have provided people with opportunities for helping roles, roles which have become increasingly difficult to find in our society as more and more helping has been taken over by professionals. Self-help or mutual aid

"...self-help groups ... are returning to the individual a feeling of competence and self-respect ... forging new links, connections among people."

groups provide a mechanism whereby individuals in a collective setting with others who face similar life situations can assume responsibility for their own bodies, psyches, and behavior and can help others do the same. They are the grassroots answer to our hierarchical, professionalized society - to a society which attempts in so many ways to render impotent the individual, the family, the neighbor. Not only are self-help groups providing desperately needed services but they are returning to the individual a feeling of competence and self-respect and they are forging new links, connections among people.

DR. DOROTHY ROWE'S THE DEPRESSION HANDBOOK

8/13
"It is our own real, lived experience which leads us into the prison of depression. It is not a gene, or our hormones, or our dysfunctional and illogical thinking, our lack of faith, or our complexes and inadequacies which have brought depression upon us, it is what has happened to us and, most importantly, what we have made of what has happened to us: it is the conclusions we draw from our experience.

That sort of conclusions which leads us, finally, into the prison of depression was not drawn illogically, or fantastically, or crazily, but were the correct conclusions to draw, given the information we had at the time.

If, when you were a child, all the adults whom you loved and trusted were telling you that you were bad and that if you didn't mend your ways terrible things would happen to you, you wisely and correctly drew the conclusion that you were bad and had to work hard to be good. If, when you were a child, all the people you loved and trusted left you or disappointed or betrayed you, you wisely and correctly drew the conclusion that you must be wary of other people and that you should never love anyone completely ever again. You were not to know that if we grow up believing that we are intrinsically bad, and that other people are dangerous, we shall become increasingly isolated, the joy will disappear from our life, and that we shall fall into despair...." [Preface, The Depression Handbook, 1991, Collins, London.]

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DEPRESSED? HERE IS A WAY OUT!

Hugh Smith, 1990 being reissued by HarperCollins, Fount, England.

Publication date is March 21st, 1991. I hope your bookseller will order you a copy. Dr. Dorothy Rowe wrote a fine Forward to the book.

OXO

"Seeing connections is a part of wisdom, and living wisely means living harmoniously. Living harmoniously means avoiding the painful dead-ends of blame, fault-finding, guilt, revenge and not forgiving; it means being responsible for yourself, limiting and defining your responsibility for others, and seeing the connections between your actions and the actions of others." Depression: The Way out of your prison. Dr. Dorothy Rowe, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983, p. 142

++++ Prescription price for the TABLET is \$5 for 4 Issues++++