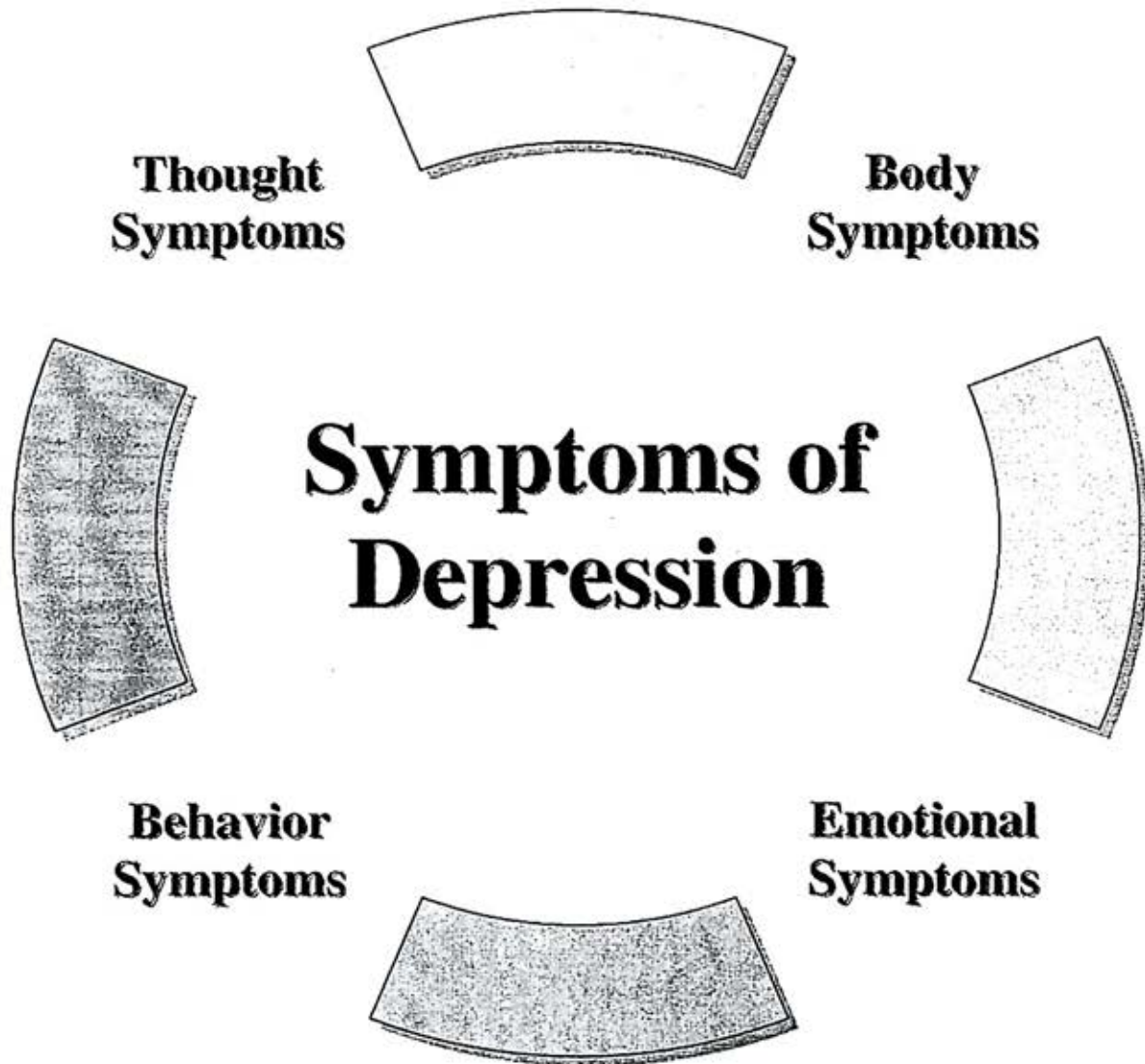


# What is Clinical Depression?

Depression is an illness that involves the body, thinking, emotions, and behavior. It affects the way a person eats and sleeps, self-esteem, and outlook on life. It is worse than a passing bad mood. A depressed person can't just make himself or herself better. Without treatment, symptoms can last for weeks or months. Appropriate treatment (psychotherapy and medication) can help most people.



## Thought Symptoms

Worthlessness  
Helplessness  
Thinking about Death  
Trouble concentrating

## Body Symptoms

Fatigue  
Agitation  
Aches & pains  
Tiredness

## Emotional Symptoms

Low/sad mood  
No pleasure  
Too much guilt  
Hopelessness

## Behavior Symptoms

Change in sleep  
Change in hunger  
Low motivation  
Suicide wish or plan

*Symptoms from the DSM IV-TR  
(American Psychiatric  
Association, 2000)*

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# What Causes Depression?

## Risk Factors

- **Gender** – Women are 2x as likely as men to be diagnosed with depression (26% vs. 12%)
- **Age** – People over age 65 are more vulnerable to depression.
- **Marital Status** – Married people are depressed less often than divorced or widowed people.
- **Family History** – People with depressed family members are at a higher risk.
- **Previous Episode** – If you have been depressed before, you are at a higher risk to be depressed again.

## Biology and Genetics

- **Brain Damage** – Damage to some parts of your brain can lead to depression symptoms.
- **Brain chemicals** (neurotransmitters) – Depressed people have lower levels of some chemicals.
- **Hormones** – Hormone imbalances (e.g. thyroid problems) can lead to depression symptoms.
- **Cortisol** – About 50% of depressed people have too much cortisol, which is a stress hormone.

## Medical Conditions

- Medical conditions, like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, cancer, HIV/AIDS, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, etc. can lead to depression.
- Pain usually causes anxiety at first, but pain can cause depression when it lasts a long time.

## Stress / Grief

- **Phases of Stress:** Alarm → Resistance → Exhaustion
- **Death** – Loss of a loved one, especially if you didn't expect it, can cause depression.
- **Divorce or breakup** – Change in an important relationship may be tough to cope with.

## Harmful Thinking Patterns

- Depressed people have negative thoughts about themselves, the world, and the future. These are called **thinking errors**.
- **Learned Helplessness** – Life is so hard that you learn to give up and quit trying.
- **Negative Reasoning** – Depressed people give negative reasons for their behavior.
  - *Internal Reasoning* – "It's all my fault."
  - *Stable Reasoning* – "This problem is never going to change."
  - *Global Reasoning* – "Everything is a problem"

# Sleep Rules

- 1. The Bedroom should be a cool temperature, quiet, and dark.**
  - Really hot or cold temperatures can cause sleep problems.
  - Lots of noise can disrupt sleep. You can use "white noise" like a fan to help.
  - Use blinds, black-out shades, or wear a sleep mask if your bedroom is too light.
  - Turn your clock around backwards. Watching the clock at night makes people tense.
- 2. Lie down for sleep only when you feel drowsy or sleepy.**
  - If you go to bed too early, it just gives you time to worry about the day, think about tomorrow, or worry about not falling asleep.
- 3. If you can't sleep in 15 minutes, get out of bed, go to a different room, and do something relaxing.**
  - You can read, listen to relaxing music, watch a quiet movie, or do an activity that is not exciting.
  - Go back to bed only when you feel sleepy.
- 4. Set your alarm clock for the same time every morning.**
  - Get up at the same time on weekdays and weekends.
  - Don't change your alarm clock no matter when you went to bed or how many times you woke up at night.
  - This helps to set your biological clock.
- 5. Do not read, eat, watch TV, work, or worry in your bedroom.**
  - Doing activities (besides sleep & sex) in your bedroom can lead to sleep problems.
- 6. Do not take daytime naps.**
  - When you stay awake all day it makes you more sleepy at night.
  - If you have to nap, make it less than 1 hour and before 3pm.
- 7. Have a habit for getting ready for bed quietly.**
  - Do the same routine every day – reading, bathing, brushing teeth, etc.

# Coping Skills

## Improve the Moment

**IMPROVE your ability to handle pain and tough times.**

**Imagery** – Use your mind to think of relaxing scenes.

- Imagine a relaxing scene to help you feel better. You can think of a secret room where you can go when you feel threatened or upset. Close the door on anything harmful. Think about what the room looks like and, picture everything going well. Imagine hurtful emotion and pain draining out of you like water from a pipe.

**Meaning** – Find or make some purpose in your pain.

- Create some meaning or value in your pain or negative emotion. Focus on anything positive you can think of. Repeat the positive over and over in your mind. Read about and think about spiritual values to make sense of your suffering. Make lemonade out of lemons.

**Prayer** – Find peace through praying to God or a higher being.

- Open your heart to God, greater wisdom or a Supreme Being. Pray for strength to put up with the pain you are in right now. Turn things over to your higher power. Recognize that you don't need (or have) control over everything in your life.

**Relaxation** – Practice relaxing your muscles, which helps you to feel better.

- Learn how to relax your muscles, which helps calm your body and mind. Practice active and passive relaxation, meditation, or imagery. Take a hot bath/shower, or drink a glass of warm milk. Rub (or ask someone else to rub) your shoulders, neck, arms, or legs. Breathe deeply from your stomach.

**One thing in the moment** – Focus your attention on the present.

- Focus all of your mind on what you are doing right now. Put your mind in the present moment, and don't let yourself be distracted. Pay attention to how your body feels when you move (e.g. walking, sitting, eating, washing dishes, petting a cat, etc.).

**Vacation** – Take a short break from your normal schedule.

- Give yourself a brief vacation. Take a nap, or get into bed and pull up the covers for 15 minutes. Stay in a hotel for a night. Go to the beach, park, or swimming pool. Go camping. Take your phone off the hook at home, or take a break from doing hard work.

**Encouragement** – Remind yourself that you can handle tough situations.

- Be your own cheerleader/coach. Tell yourself over and over "I can stand this," "This will get better with time," "It could be worse," or "I am doing the best I can."

Adapted in part from the *Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder* by Marsha Linehan (1993). The Guilford Press.

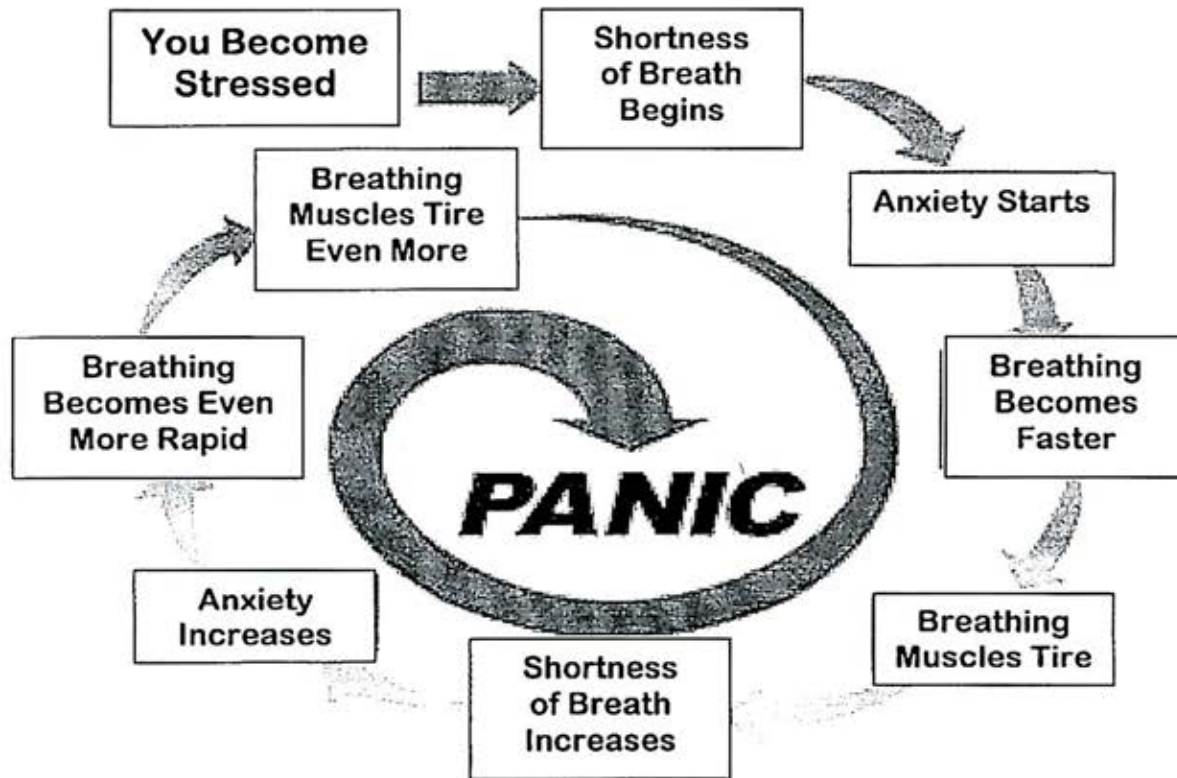
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- 1 Get up fifteen minutes earlier in the morning. The inevitable morning mishaps will be less stressful.
- 2 Prepare for the morning the evening before. Set the breakfast table. Make lunches. Put out the clothes you plan to wear, etc.
- 3 Don't rely on your memory. Write down appointment times, when to pick up the laundry, when library books are due, etc. ("The palest ink is better than the most retentive memory."—Old Chinese Proverb)
- 4 Do nothing you have to lie about later.
- 5 Make copies of all keys. Bury a house key in a secret spot in the garden. Carry a duplicate car key in your wallet, apart from your key ring.
- 6 Practice preventive maintenance. Your car, appliances, home and relationships will be less likely to break down "at the worst possible moment."
- 7 Be prepared to wait. A paperback book can make a wait in a post office line almost pleasant.
- 8 Procrastination is stressful. Whatever you want to do tomorrow, do today; whatever you want to do today, do it now.
- 9 Plan ahead. Don't let the gas tank get below one-quarter full; keep a well-stocked "emergency shelf" of home staples; don't wait until you're down to your last bus token or postage stamp to buy more, etc.
- 10 Don't put up with something that doesn't work right. If your alarm clock, wallet, shoe laces, windshield wipers—whatever—are a constant aggravation, get them fixed or get new ones.
- 11 Allow 15 minutes of extra time to get to appointments. Plan to arrive at an airport one hour before domestic departures.
- 12 Eliminate (or restrict) the amount of caffeine in your diet.
- 13 Always set up contingency plans, "just in case." ("If for some reason either of us is delayed, here's what we'll do..." Or, "If we get split up in the shopping center, here's where we'll meet.")
- 14 Relax your standards. The world will not end if the grass doesn't get mowed this weekend.
- 15 Pollyanna-Power! For every one thing that goes wrong, there are probably 10 or 50 or 100 blessings. Count'em!
- 16 Ask questions. Taking a few moments to repeat back the directions that someone expects of you, etc., can save hours. (The old "the hurrieder I go, the behinder I get" idea.)
- 17 Say "No!" Saying no to extra projects, social activities and invitations you know you don't have the time or energy for takes practice, self-respect and a belief that everyone, everyday, needs quiet time to relax and to be alone.
- 18 Unplug you phone. Want to take a long bath, meditate, sleep or read without interruption? Drum up the courage to temporarily disconnect.  
(The possibility of there being a terrible emergency in the next hour or so is almost nil.)
- 19 Turn "needs" into preferences. Our basic physical needs translate into food, water, and keeping warm. Everything else is a preference. Don't get attached to preferences.
- 20 Simplify, simplify, simplify.
- 21 Make friends with nonworriers. Chronic worrywarts are contagious.
- 22 Take many stretch breaks when you sit a lot.
- 23 If you can't find quiet at home, wear earplugs.

- 24** Get enough sleep. Set your alarm for bedtime.
- 25** Organize! A place for everything and everything in its place. Losing things is stressful.
- 26** Monitor your body for stress signs. If your stomach muscles are knotted and your breathing is shallow, relax your muscles and take some deep, slow breaths.
- 27** Write your thoughts and feelings down on paper. It can help you clarify and give you a renewed perspective.
- 28** Do this yoga exercise when you need to relax: Inhale through your nose to the count of eight. Pucker your lips and exhale slowly to the count of 16. Concentrate on the long sighing sound and feel the tension dissolve. Repeat 10 times.
- 29** Visualize success before any experience you fear. Take time to go over every part of the event in your mind. Imagine how great you will look, and how well you will present yourself.
- 30** If the stress of deadlines gets in the way of doing a job, use diversion. Take your mind off the task and you will focus better when you're on the task.
- 31** Talk out your problems with a friend. It helps to relieve confusion.
- 32** Avoid people and places that don't fit your personal needs and desires. If you hate politics, don't spend time with politically excited people.
- 33** Learn to live one day at a time.
- 34** Every day, do something you really enjoy.
- 35** Add an ounce of love to everything you do.
- 36** Take a bath or shower to relieve tension.
- 37** Do a favor for someone every day.
- 38** Focus on understanding rather than on being understood, on loving rather than on being loved.
- 39** Looking good makes you feel better.
- 40** Take more time between tasks to relax. Schedule a realistic day.
- 41** Be flexible. Some things are not worth perfection.
- 42** Stop negative self-talk: "I'm too fat, too old, etc..."
- 43** Change pace on weekends. If your week was slow, be active. If you felt nothing was accomplished during the week, do a weekend project.
- 44** "Worry about the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves." Pay attention to the details in front of you.
- 45** Do one thing at a time. When you are working on one thing, don't think about everything else you have to do.
- 46** Allow time every day for privacy, quiet and thinking.
- 47** Do unpleasant tasks early and enjoy the rest of the day.
- 48** Delegate responsibility to capable people.
- 49** Take lunch breaks. Get away from your work in body and in mind.
- 50** Count to 1,000 not 10, before you say something that could make matters worse.
- 51** Forgive people and events. Accept that we live in an imperfect world.
- 52** Have an optimistic view of the world. Most people do the best they can.

## Coping with Shortness of Breath: Controlling Stress

Stress can cause shortness of breath. When you start to feel short of breath, it's common to become anxious. Anxiety, in turn, makes you breathe faster. Then you may start to panic. Learn to relax and control stress to prevent shortness of breath and avoid panic.



### When Anxiety Takes Over

When you feel short of breath, your neck, shoulder, and chest muscles tense. You become anxious and begin to breathe faster. Your breathing muscles tire and trap air in your lungs. Your chest may feel tight. Anxiety increases and you may start to panic.

### Stop Panic Before It Starts

The key to controlling panic is to learn to relax and to use pursed-lip and diaphragmatic breathing whenever you start to feel anxious. When you are becoming short of breath, sit, relax your arms and shoulders, and lean forward, resting your upper body on your forearms. Breathe in slowly and deeply, then exhale slowly and fully. Take at least twice as long to exhale as to inhale.