



Overcoming Depression

Paul Gilbert

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A Books on Prescription Title

Break free from the hell of depression

If you suffer from depression you are far from alone. Depression is very common, affecting over 300 million people around the world. Written by Professor Paul Gilbert, internationally recognised for his work on depression, this highly acclaimed self-help book has been of benefit to thousands of people including sufferers, their friends and families, and those working in the medical profession.

This fully revised third edition has been extensively updated and rewritten to reflect over ten years of new research on understanding and treating depression, particularly the importance of developing compassionate ways of thinking, behaving and feeling. It contains helpful case studies and new, easy-to-follow, step-by-step suggestions and exercises to help you understand your depression and lift your mood.

Overcoming Depression Details

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From Reader Review Overcoming Depression for online ebook

Nimue Brown says

This is a really valuable book and I think it would help if everyone read, regardless of whether they think they are depressed or not. It's based on Cognitive Behavioural approachsd to managing depression. The logic goes like this, thoughts, feelings and behaviour are all connected. Change one, and others will change. Therefore by getting control of your thoughts you feel differently, and by changing behaviour you can get more control of thoughts and as you feel differently so thoughts and behaviour can change. Negative thoughts and feelings supported by unhelpful behaviour create depressive cycles. These can be broken. The book acknowledges that some depression may be genetic or about body chemistry or caused by external issues. Having control of your thoughts will, at the very least, make it easier to spot if it's not really your thinking that is the problem. It may also help you find the motivation and confidence to seek medical help for genetic and biological depression and make changes to alleviate depression caused by external factors. Bad relationship and how we react to it causes a lot of depression. Workplace stress, social stress, a history of poor parenting, inability to communicate, misunderstanding others, feeling entitled to revenge, and other facets of relationship difficulty, are caused by and exacerbate depression. This is the reason I think everyone should read this book. Not only does it give depressive people a chance to tackle depressive cycles, but it allows everyone to consider how they manage their own thoughts, feelings and reactions. The onus should not be on the unhappy people always to change themselves in order to cope with life's shiteheads. However, all too often the unhappy person ends up on medication, and the person who is bullying them to mask deep insecurity, for example, goes unchallenged and gets no help.

The one thing this book made me wonder is why we are not teaching, in schools, the basics of good thinking, healthy relationship and behaviour management. Books like this make it evident that we have the knowledge. How much misery, illness, crime, bullying, and future bad parenting could we eradicate simply by teaching thought and behaviour management as a curriculum subject?

I think we have an underlying cultural belief that the sick person is the wrong one who needs fixing. As depression and other mental health problems increase, we need to consider that we are creating and perpetuating a sick and abusive culture, that is bound to cause to depression to many within it. We need to collectively change our beliefs about what depression is, ad what it means. I also think we need to be culturally less tolerant of mental cruelty, abuse and toxic behaviour.

The exercises, explanation and whatnot are brilliant. They won't fix you however, unless you commit to working with them. This takes self discipline and motivation – something it has to be acknowledged a depressed person may be short of. But, it's a place to start, and any step, any considering of options, can be a great help. So even if you don't feel able to do much, do something, and see if it can inspire you just a little bit to do more. That way lies freedom.

Christine Jolley says

As someone who has suffered from serious depression their entire lives I find it interesting how much cognitive behavioral techniques are pushed down our throats. If it was that easy to change our thinking, we would do it ourselves and wouldn't need a book to try to get advice on how to do it.

Samantha Norman says

Enormously helpful and comforting

I thoroughly recommend this book to anyone suffering from depression. the helpful,compassionate and sensible advice is a huge comfort. It certainly helped me

Anser says

The book is not helpful at all. The information provided is not helpful to me.
Also, I think after reading this book, that I am not depressed. Thank God. I hope I stay this way.
After reading almost 18 chapters, still nothing helped, so I just stopped there.
I thought this book would help me, or maybe I would notice I am depressed.

Dave Flodine says

Depression is insidious. I only clued into being affected by it again close to a month ago. I thought through a lot of work, I had put that behind me, but based on some huge life events, it obviously creeped its way back in and snuck up on me without my even knowing it.

Once I realised what was happening, I looked for some new techniques to dealing with depression and found this book.

I think it's a highly worthwhile read to anyone who is suffering or has suffered from depression. For those of you who know people with depression, the first section about what depression actually is, is valuable to treat such people with understanding and compassion. The rest of the book and techniques are all about learning to treat yourself with compassion.

I'm glad I read this.

Phil says

An incredibly valuable book that made a huge impact with my recovery over the past year. It's very easy to read and is written in a way that's friendly and understanding. The book does an amazing job with explaining depression and describing the importance of understanding it. This was useful to remove the self-blame, shame and frustrations that usually accompanies depression. I approached this book as if I was getting the most important lessons in my life and I've walked away with a lot of life changing knowledge. The book is full of scientific references that back up what was written which was helpful when I was skeptical. Reading through this book you will learn many ways of helping yourself and being compassionate to who needs it the most: You. For those who are struggling I hope this book will help you as much as it did for me.

Soyeun says

I suppose it's impossible to rate a book on depression--either you are depressed and nothing is ever good enough or you are not depressed and it's difficult to focus on a topic that's not useful. Ha ha.

The first part of the book had compelling explanations for the phenomenon. The practical parts of the book was thorough but that made it repetitive in places. In some ways, it is a very basic book, which can be a positive trait for when life seems extra complicated.

Marjorie says

Combines cognitive therapy with Buddhist-flavored ideas of mindfulness and compassion. Almost 600 pages and packed with exercises. Haven't read it cover to cover, but read the beginning material and dip into the rest from time to time. Friendly writing style with a touch of British humor. Author is a psychologist and professor who received the OBE (Order of the British Empire) in January 2011 for his work.

Jurgen Dhaese says

An absolutely brilliant book. It's massive, it's huge, it's repetitive at times. But it's oh so worth it.

If you're dealing with depressive or negative thoughts - read it.

This book explains what depression is, what function it serves and gives you cognitive behavioral therapy exercises to learn how to deal with it better, and ultimately, overcome it.

I'll be practicing these exercises daily for years to come.

Summary of book (taken from final chapter):

Depression is probably one of the darkest winters of the soul. Researchers throughout the world are trying to work out why we have this capacity to feel as terrible as we do – and many have come up with various explanations. We know that there are many different types of depression, with different causes and factors maintaining it. In this book, we have looked at some common types of depression. Whatever else we say about depression, it is clear that there is a toning down of the positive feelings and a toning up of our threat- and loss-based ones. The emotions of anger, anxiety and dread were originally designed to protect us. It is when they get out of balance that they can have unhelpful effects. One evolved protective strategy is to slow down and hide – try to recuperate. In depression, however, this ‘go to the back of the cave and stay there’ is not conducive to our well-being. Our energy takes a nose-dive, our sleep is affected and of course our thoughts and feelings about ourselves, others and the world we live in are dark. But fundamentally, depression is a brain state and brain pattern to make us lie low when things are stressful. We now know that depression is a potential state of mind that has evolved over many millions of years. Many animals too can show depressed states. We also know that depression is very much linked to the support and acceptance of others and ourselves. We have evolved to be motivated to be wanted, accepted, valued and have status in our

relationships. Depression is marked by inner feelings of being distant and cut off from others, with a sense of emotional aloneness. What comes through from our understanding about depression, and many studies on our human needs, is that we have evolved to be very responsive to kindness – from the day we are born to the day we die. I outlined some of the evidence for this in Chapter 2. Kindness soothes the threat system and indicates helpful resources. This in turn reduces the ‘go to the back of the cave’ protection strategy. This is why it is so important to learn self-kindness, because your brain is designed to respond to it. Depression also relates to our desire to feel in control of our lives rather than controlled.

- Depression is a very varied problem. It ranges from the mild to the severe. Some depressions are associated with much anxiety, others with much anger. Some come on slowly, others quite quickly.

- Accept your depression as a brain state that has been triggered in you rather than feel ashamed of it, fight with it, hate it or condemn yourself. Once you accept it then you are freed to work compassionately with it. You can then take the objective view that by working in a certain way you may be able to shift this brain state. It is about healing our minds.

- There is an important psychological component to every depression, which this book has focused on, but this does not mean that psychological change is all you need to recover from depression. Some people benefit from medication and others require a change in social circumstances.

- Commonly, when we are depressed, we have problems in the way we think and experience ourselves and relationships. We may try to run from our painful emotions or ruminate on unhelpful emotions; our fears, moods and emotions take control over our thinking. Training our mind is a way of gaining control over it. But, like learning to ride a bike or do tricks with a football, it helps if we dedicate ourselves to the training.

- One key path of training is to make a commitment to develop one’s compassion for self and others, and with this one’s wisdom, emotional tolerance, strength and kindness. We can try to practise compassionate attention, thinking, behavior and feeling – each day!

- Compassion feelings can be difficult to experience because that system in our brain is toned down and/ or we are frightened of it. It can feel overwhelming, or make us feel sadder; we may feel we don’t deserve it or that we will let ourselves off the hook or become weak. So at first we need to work on compassionate thinking and compassionate behaviour. Think about compassion training as physiotherapy for your brain. It is then a question of step by step, working your exercises to increase your capacity to tolerate and feel compassion.

- Self-help books can be very useful, but of course sometimes we also need professional help. Self-help is no substitute for that. It may be that reading this book has encouraged you to consider whether you might benefit from therapy or other forms of help. If you think you might be depressed then contact your family doctor, who can talk things through with you, assess your symptoms and difficulties and if necessary refer you to a properly trained person.

- Shame can be one of the main reasons why you may be reluctant to seek help, but remember that depression is one of the most common problems that mental health professionals work with. You are far from alone. A similar case can be made for talking with friends; open up to friends, but choose people who you think will be able to understand you.

- Although you may need extra help, there are also many things that you can try to help yourself or at least avoid making your depression worse. To come back to my main point then, make a commitment to develop

your abilities to be kind to yourself, able to reflect on your thoughts and your feelings using some of the ideas in this book, and engage in behaviors that have a chance to move you out of the depressed state of mind.

Read this book. Be compassionate and kind to yourself. Be well. Stay well.

Hillingdon Libraries says

Find this book at Hillingdon Libraries

Jon Champion says

This book was a nice opportunity to understand the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy as well as understanding that kindness and compassion are the keys to many of life's locked doors.

Lena says

Ένας καλογραμμένος οδηγός αυτοβοήθειας για τους ψυχικούς που φωτίζει το θέμα της ψυχικής διαταραχής από ιατρική-βιολογική-κοινωνική πλευρά, ενώ προτείνει λύσεις που μπορούν να εφαρμοστούν από τον ίδιο τον ασθενή, χρησιμοποιώντας γνωσιακές-συμπεριφοριστικές τεχνικές. Πολύ χρήσιμο, έχει την γκριση του Ινστιτούτου Ρεύνας και Θεραπείας της Συμπεριφοράς.

Simon says

Reading this became a real monkey on my back, I've been plugging away at it for pretty much a year. And I think in honesty any real therapeutic value got diluted by it, however finishing it is a major achievement for me because it clears my mind with regards starting reading a new book on the subject that might be more helpful.

And in fairness some of it was very helpful, it helped me sort out a lot of the self-bullying language that depression uses, likewise the all-or-nothing thinking, and other little tricks it uses to hook your brain into thinking the way it wants you to think.

So it wasn't a waste of time. It just... should never have taken me so long to read.

(And the reason for that is complex and related to my home situation at the time I was trying to focus on getting better and being distracted by other events.)

Kiwi Begs2Differ \ says

A great introduction to CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) and its uses in the treatment of depression, providing valuable insights and concrete helpful advice.

There is a degree of repetition (e.g. many references all-or-nothing thinking) but I guess this is unavoidable in a self-help book, where the same techniques and strategies are applied to different scenarios. I found the later chapters on shame, guilt, anger and forgiveness are both well developed and compelling.

The problem here is that, life being what it is, it will not respect our 'shoulds' and 'oughts'. Some people feel that we should not have to die, and instead of coming to terms with it, they rage about the fact that life 'shouldn't be like this.' Sometimes our 'shoulds' stop us from doing the emotional work we need to do in order to come to terms with things as they are and work out the best solutions for dealing with them.

Mohammed Ahsa says

actually its somehow difficult to rate a book abt subjects like depression n i gave it 4 cuz of the first part which was amazing by makin me understand it v well ..

n as it was mentioned there, If you suffer from depression, you are, sadly, far from being alone. In fact, it has been estimated that there may be over 350 million people in the world today who have it.
