



Everyday Help for Depression: MY PEERS

(i.e., do a few of these everyday – even when you don’t feel like it)

Meaning: find *small* ways to be of service to others; serve something larger than you.

Remember it doesn’t have to be “big” to count (see below).

Your goals: Find *workable* goals that give you a sense of accomplishment. Something is workable if it is something you can control (it doesn’t depend on others), something manageable (i.e., not overwhelming), and something realistic (for you – not for someone else). Success breeds a feeling of success. Just remember, if something goes wrong with your goal, adopt a “what-can-I-learn-from-this” attitude (vs. a judgmental, “this-is-why-I-suck” attitude).

Pleasant Events: Schedule pleasant activities – don’t wait for yourself to be “in the mood”; Give yourself permission for a 30 minute “vacation” everyday. Just remember to do these activities with the right attitude (see below “Engagement”). Also, practice gratitude (without self-judgment) – take time to notice what went well today; not just what went wrong. Consider keeping a gratitude journal.

Engagement: While doing pleasant events – stay in the present. This is sometimes called mindfulness. As best you can, try not to be in your head with self-judgment. Just notice the self-judgment and bring yourself – gently – back to the present moment.

Exercise and Eating Right: Doing *moderate* exercise about five times a week (30 minutes a pop) can dramatically help your mood. “Moderate” exercise is a level of exercise where it is difficult to sing while doing it. Also pay attention to how the type of food you’re eating affects your mood.

Relationships: Interact frequently with others that bring you up (not people that bring you down). Remember: it’s okay to have some alone time, but find a balance – don’t isolate yourself or anyone would become depressed.

Sleep Regularly: Keep a balance here as well: not too little; not too much. As much as you can, keep a regular sleep schedule.