

Depressed or anxious? – fake it until you make it?

Depression and anxiety are very well covered on this site. The black dog of depression occasionally follows some of us around. Hypnotherapy can be useful in helping you with your perspective and can help you manage the vicious cycle of thoughts and emotions that often circle around when depressed or anxious. It is important to point out that if this is you, it is good practice to visit your GP and discuss your options. You do not have to take medication if you don't wish to and there are rising numbers of people that will investigate other methods of managing their symptoms.

Often the instinct that many people have is to withdraw, isolate themselves and collapse into an emotionally dark place.

In life coaching, one of the principles often talked about is balance. When you are depressed or anxious you are out of natural balance, but often what people do next can make their condition better or worse. You may have been out of balance for some time and this may have contributed to your depression. One of the principles in life coaching and NLP is “**fake it until you make it**”. That is by looking after yourself when depressed, you can improve your chances of improving your symptoms. It is important to point out that none of this is a quick fix and there are no guarantees that any of these actions will alleviate depression. However by “**faking it until you make it**” you significantly reduce the chances of your depression deepening and you will at least maintain better health as a result of looking after yourself. The closer that you stay to a sensible lifestyle the more chance you have of ridding yourself of depression naturally.

Depression is not usually a constant. It is a very individual thing for each person. We are cautious about using the term “depressed” because once you label something you can also imply hopelessness. When clinically depressed you may at times feel in the depths of despair, but this can change during the day and although the feelings of depression can be debilitating, many retain their sense of humour and continue to function very well on many levels at parts of the day. Try not to write the day off but take it as it comes.

“Catastrophic language and thinking”, be gentle with yourself. You are depressed – not stupid, pathetic, a waste of space, a hindrance, better off not here. Your friends and family will probably be shocked that you have started using such language – don't do it – it is just reinforcing the feelings of despair. Try to live in the moment and bring yourself back into the moment making the most of every small thing. Be kind to yourself as if you were your own best friend, if you are hard on yourself it isn't going to make you snap out of it. If you want to talk to yourself do it like a kind, gentle best friend or grandparent would. Determination and courage can help you but beating yourself up when you are depressed is not likely to suddenly give you courage and determination.

“Isolation” – when you are anxious or depressed you tend to isolate yourself and withdraw from human contact. This further puts you out of balance. Try to spend the same amount of time that you normally do with friends and relatives. Social interaction and laughter can hugely boost the levels of beneficial hormones in your brain. Get as many hugs and cuddles as you can.

“Get stuff off your chest” – talking to a third party or therapist can help release anger and other negative emotions. A hypnotherapist can allow you to get stuff off your chest before any hypnosis, though hypnosis can help you to develop a more positive view of yourself or your circumstances.

Exercise or meditate or use “Progressive Muscle Relaxation”. A great way to burn off excess adrenaline and stress hormones is through exercise. Alternatively, meditating and calming the mind can stimulate the removal of stress hormones and progressive muscle relaxation is great for achieving great levels of relaxation and removing excess stress hormones. Are your shoulders tense? Try tensing the muscles even more for five seconds and



then relax them. Do you notice a difference in tension now? Yoga and tai chi are also very good.

“Visualisation” – this is mainly how hypnotherapy and self-hypnosis work. By focusing on pleasant images in the mind or replacing negative images with more positive or even humorous ones this can have dramatic effects on your mood and your brain chemistry.

“Waiting to feel motivated” - motivation is a huge subject in itself. Depression can rob you of motivation, yet if you don't do some of the things that you need to do, you may not feel good about yourself and this can be a vicious circle. Keep doing stuff even if you don't feel motivated to do it. Tidying up can have a huge effect on your morale and motivation. To get motivated, put yourself in motion. Motion creates motivation.

“Environment and circumstances” – could your depression be caused by something? Do you need to bite the bullet and change your environment? None of these big decisions should be taken lightly and you should perhaps talk them through with a sympathetic ear, counsellor or therapist.

“Nutrition” - it is vitally important that you eat properly. Sugary fatty foods may satisfy in the short term but when you are depressed it is vitally important that you stabilise your blood sugar levels. Go for low GI foods and reduce your intake of sugar, alcohol and caffeine. A small amount of alcohol may help you relax and enjoy the moment but any more may affect your sleep pattern and you may wake up the next morning with booze blues. Eating healthily and in particular oily fish can boost serotonin production. Not being bothered to eat properly is also a vicious cycle that can trap you in depression.

“Feeling tired” – you may already have had eight hours sleep but you may want more. It's fine to take a short nap if you feel really fatigued but resist the urge to go into deep sleep as this can lower your mood further and you wake up feeling groggy and sad.

“Get closer to nature” - being outside, living in the moment and connecting with the outdoors can lift your spirits.

Try **“faking it until you make it”**, you may start to feel better after a week or two. If it's not working and you feel symptoms are worsening then you should seek further help from your GP.

About the author

Most of my clients have stress or anxiety related issues. Hypnotherapy provides fast effective relief from stress and anxiety. With that relief clients can then start to make changes to their lives that truly transform.

I learned about anxiety and depression the hard way a number of years ago and it helps me be attuned to my clients.

[View profile](#)

Hypnotherapy Directory is not responsible for the articles published by members. The views expressed are those of the member who wrote the article.