

Depression and Spirituality EBook:

The 7th Most IMPORTANT 'Secret' To Relieving Depression...

“How do you draw near to God and allow him to change your life and relieve your depression?”

Introducing...

"3 Basic Steps to Draw Near to God and End Depression"

-written by Merri Ellen, former depression sufferer, editor of www.cure-your-depression.com



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Thank you for requesting our Depression and Spirituality e-book from www.cure-your-depression.com

We are dedicated to sharing with you positive and successful tips to cure your depression. There is hope! You are worth it!

You are free to share this e-book with friends and family.

This book is for YOU!

It has been created to follow the article found at:

<http://www.cure-your-depression.com/depression-and-spirituality.html>

The 7th Most IMPORTANT 'Secret' To Relieving Depression...

“How do you draw near to God and allow him to change your life and relieve your depression?”

Depression and Spirituality E-Book – How to Draw Near to God.

www.cure-your-depression.com – home of the free depression cure report based on scientific research!

"3 Basic Steps to Draw Near to God and End Depression"

Wouldn't it be wonderful, if you could just take your depression and put it in someone's hand and be done with it? Wouldn't be wonderful if it was that easy? If someone called you up on the phone and said, "Don't worry about your problems today. I'll take care of them for you!" **Do you ever get the feeling like life is too much?** I used to think about giving up every day!

God has always offered his help to us and yet we have this notion that we can do this 'life' thing on our own strength. **But, you and I know that there must be something more to this thing we call 'life'.** It can be so empty and seem like there is nothing to take away the pain. There's got to be a better way. The emptiness and loneliness and hopelessness can be too much.

"My depression deepened unbearably and finally it seemed to me as though I were at the very bottom of the pit. I still gagged badly at the notion of a Power greater than myself, but finally, just for the moment, the last vestige of my proud obstinacy was crushed. All at once I found myself crying out, "If there is a God, let Him show Himself! I am ready to do anything, anything!"- Bill Wilson

Bill explains how his pain and weight of depression lifted immediately after praying this prayer of desperation...

"And then it burst upon me that I was a free man... All about me and through me there was a wonderful feeling of Presence, and I thought to myself, "So this is the God of the preachers!" A great peace stole over me and I thought, "No matter how wrong things seem to be, they are still all right. Things are all right with God and His world." (Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age: A Brief History of A.A., p.63, 1957)

Bill Wilson was one of the founders of 'Alcoholics Anonymous', a group that acknowledges God's important part in recovery.

Consider this ancient wisdom penned by Paul the Apostle in 60 A.D. in a letter to people in Turkey...

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you... And the God of all grace... will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

Perhaps you already know that you have a loving Creator who wants to be apart of your life; One who wants to help you in your fears, your worries, your suffering and your depression. One who also wants to celebrate with you in your joys and blessings! Or perhaps you are still searching...

Let me share with you how asking God to restore my health and drawing near to him has made all the difference.

In our web article in part 1 of depression and spirituality found on our website, I shared with you this quote by Dr. Bill Gillham. Read it again because it's a benchmark quote and critical observation!

"A practitioner who always treats depression as the problem is missing the mark. Just as fever is but a symptom of the cause, so it is with depression. **Depression is a symptom of a deeper cause.** Most counselors would agree that less than 5% of depression cases have physically induced depression which does not respond to counseling. PMS, hypoglycemia, diabetes, hormonal imbalance, thyroid or blood sugar problems, etc. are physical factors which can cause depression. Counseling such a [person] with spiritual truth can subject him to even greater despair because although he may see the truth which sets a man free, he can't appropriate it. However, **the remaining 95% of the depressed [patients] can experience victory solely through spiritual counsel.**"

If you are suffering the ill effects of medication and have tried everything to cure your depression. Consider allowing God to change your life...

My own story...

Four years ago I was depressed and suicidal. I often could not sleep and one night I was weeping uncontrollably. At 3am I got out my Bible and opened it to read the prayers of a king - King David talking to God; calling out in desperation for an answer. I could relate with his pain and made them my own prayers (found in the book of Psalms). I poured out my heart letting God know my pain and asked him for his wisdom and delivery from my depression. This was the first step towards freedom; admitting that I could not beat it on my own strength. God worked in my heart and my mind relieving my depression and replacing it with joy! I now am healthy and happy enough to enjoy being a mother of 2 and have the energy to invest in them. I could never have done this 4 years ago!

Now, this didn't happen over night. It still took effort on my part. There were a few things I learned that God was guiding me in. He led me to *forgive* those who hurt me which brought on despair, discouragement and depression. He led me to *rely on him* and not others for my value. He filled that bitterness, emptiness and hopelessness and replaced it with love, joy and peace.

How do you do the impossible? How do you forgive those who hurt you? How do you become a whole and healthy person with the ability to say 'no' to bad influences and bad people in your life? *Only God truly has the power to heal the broken hearted and depressed.*

Consider these historical words...

"Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
(Matt 19:26, NIV)

"Jesus replied, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."
(Luke 18:27, NIV)

"If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes." Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"
(Mark 9:23-24, NIV)

You may have already read our article on how refusing to forgive can be a depression virus. If so, you've heard an amazing story of how one woman took the pain of being sexually abused, and released it to God, forgave her abuser and sought out to restore the lives of girls who also had experienced abuse. This woman does this in a half-way house for girls changing the futures of young girls and helping to restore their self images firmly founded on the amazing love and grace of God. (View our website for the article "Can a Virus Cause Depression?" at: <http://www.cure-your-depression.com/depression-virus.html>)

With God, all things are possible!

For me, finding a cure for my depression seemed impossible. Medication for me made things worse but the side effects of drawing near to God were awesome! We can't do this 'living thing' on our own without the help and guidance of our loving Creator!

Speaker and author Greg Laurie has correctly put it;

"Happiness is a by product of knowing God."

Just think about it for a second... If you got a brand new fancy piece of electronic equipment and you put it together without reading the user manual and came into problems with it, wouldn't you either find the manual to read and study or find someone who could translate it for you? That's like God and his Word. *He created our intricately and wonderfully designed minds and bodies. If they don't work properly, it makes sense to get the manual out (his letter to us – the Bible) or have someone who is a scholar of his letter to teach us how to use the equipment properly!* **Once we begin to understand God and know him personally, we can experience a life of joy no matter what our circumstances. His Word promises this.**

"So, how do you draw near to God to allow him to relieve your depression?"

Here are the 3 basic ways that help me to draw near to God allowing him to help me relieve my own depression...

1. I draw near to God daily through reading the truths of His Word.

Reading God's Word has made sense of my life. When loved ones get hurt, I know where to turn. When I have no answers, I know who has them. My perspective on life has changed considerably. If you've ever flown in a plane and looked down below and noticed how small things appear, you've seen miniature cows, houses, cars, etc. But once you start to come in for a landing, the houses get bigger and you see children playing in the backyards and mothers pushing strollers and dad's playing catch with their kids and you realize they are living beings.

Reading God's Word has shown me how God wants desperately to be invited into our backyards and be there for our pains, our worries, our fears, and our joys and celebrations! I once felt like a miniature under an enormous and unapproachable

God of the Universe. But reading God's Word has revealed his heart and his mind to me. It's like a back stage pass into a never ending wisdom and a never ending love.

God's Word (The Bible) is his letter to us. **Did you know that if we draw near to God, he draws near to us?** The Bible says this in James 4:8 – "Come near to God and he will come near to you." (NIV)

Dr. Paul Meier, M.D. of the life transforming Meier Clinics once wrote:

"In my personal and professional opinion, Scriptural meditation is the most important behaviour anyone can do for the well-being of his or her body, soul and spirit... Body, mind, and spirit work closely together, and research shows that it is possible to literally lower your blood pressure through meditating." (Quoted from his book, "Don't Let Jerks Get the Best of You". <http://www.cure-your-depression.com/jerks-meier.html>)

Dr. Meier also wrote a book entitled "*Meditation for Success*", which summarizes the many medical, psychological, and spiritual benefits of meditation. He strongly urges to avoid meditation which focuses on 'self' such as repeating of mantras and calling on spirit guides to help you; as this opens the door for dangerous and damaging thinking. Instead, he cautions to focus on the Word of God because it is God's love letter to us. "*Meditating on Scripture will help you move away from inborn, narcissistic thinking and toward Christ-like thoughts and attitudes. **It's like seeing God daily for therapy.***"

What could be better therapy than that with the loving Creator of the Universe? Think of the most powerful person on earth and multiply that by a trillion or more.

Why go anywhere else first? I believe one should listen to their doctor and do what he says but along side that; I believe that God must be the first step toward healing. God created us and revealed to our doctors the knowledge of modern medicine. Together, they were extremely powerful for me. It's like having a plug and an outlet. The two need to be joined together to get any power. The doctor is the plug and the real power is in the outlet. But the vacuum won't work unless both are working together. That allows us to suck it up! (Sorry about the bad pun.)

So, reading God's Word helps you to understand his wisdom, his desire for you, and his love for you and reminds you to continue to consult him on this living thing!

Here's an example of God's Word which reveals His love for us:

"This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted; anyone who refuses to trust him has long since been under the death sentence without knowing it. And why? Because of that person's failure to believe in the one-of-a-kind Son of God when introduced to him." - John 3:16-18 (The Message) (See source list for more info)

God's love for us is beyond our comprehension! Drink in his love for you, chew on it and roll around in it by meditating on his Word.

The Bible is for EVERYONE! Bono of U2 once even said that 'The Message' was the most important book he'd ever read in his entire life.
(<http://www.messagebible.com/>)

There are numerous ways to meditate on Scripture: reading it, listening to it on audio...

*"I listen daily even in my car. I hear the whole Bible every few months that way, and whenever a verse really stands out and convicts or encourages me, I write it down on a 3x5 card! I carry these cards almost everywhere I go, memorizing the verses and then meditating on them... **My life has been influenced, and my entire attitude and direction have been changed many times from meditating on such passages** as... "My yoke is easy and My burden is light." – Matthew 11:30"
(Quoted from Dr. Paul Meier's book, "Don't Let Jerks Get the Best of You")*

2. I spend time talking with God – just talking! Another way to heal the link of depression and spirituality and draw near to God is to spend time talking to God which is what we call prayer.

Ever wished you could walk with someone to hold your hand, listen to your pain and comfort you in life? That's what prayer is like. **God invites us to talk to him and tell him about our pains, fears worries and to ask him for help! Just tell him what's wrong and what you need!**

Consider these words from the Bible translated into modern English...

"Don't bargain with God. Be direct. Ask for what you need. This isn't a cat-and-mouse, hide-and-seek game we're in. If your child asks for bread, do you trick him with sawdust? If he asks for fish, do you scare him with a live snake on his plate? As bad as you are, you wouldn't think of such a thing. You're at least decent to your own children. So don't you think the God who conceived you in love will be even better?"- Matthew 7:7-11 (The Message)

Never prayed before? Don't worry. It isn't scary. This is how you can pray...

"God if you are real. Make yourself real to me!"

"Thank you God for..." (Think of the things that ARE GOOD in your life and thank Him.)

"Help me to understand how much you care about me."

"Help me to understand the Truth of this world, the Truth about who I am because of you, the Truth about you and how I can enjoy an abundant life knowing you."

God will hear you and you can be changed from the inside just as I was!

Not convinced about prayer?

Consider the medical research done such as by O'Laoire on prayer using 600 people. 496 people were prayed for by 90 people. Prayer was offered for 15 minutes daily for 12 weeks. What were the results? *"Subjects improved significantly on all 11 measures. Agents improved significantly on 10 measures."* Since the beginning of time, people have been praying. You merely have to try it for yourself to understand its power. Its side effects are awesome!

Here's a tip...

Have you ever sent someone an email or left a phone message and never heard anything back? You wonder, "Where are they?" My own prayer life seemed like that. I often felt like I never got any answers until I really dove into God's Word in a Bible reading exercise which guided me in taking what I read and personally applying it to my life. It was like a light had gone on and God began to answer my prayers in numerous ways!

What was my Bible reading exercise?

(I know we are talking about prayer but the two are tied together!) I set out to read the entire Bible in 2 years chewing on each passage I read every day. I used 'SOAP' as my guide. 'S' stood for scripture. I wrote out a portion of scripture from the section which stood out for me. 'O' stood for observation. I wrote down some observations of the passage. 'A' stood for application and I wrote down ways it could apply to my own life. 'P' stood for prayer and I prayed a prayer to God thanking God for a promise he made in the passage or asking God to help me be like the person I read about. It was an amazing experience – one that changed my life!

You can find Bible reading plans at <http://www.biblegateway.com/> and even access online Bibles to read. BibleGateway.com is a free service for reading and researching Scripture online--all in the language or translation of your choice! They provide advanced tools you can use to search the Bible by keywords or verse, as well as other tools to enhance your study of the Bible. Try it! It's awesome!

3. I choose to 'get out of myself' and to love others. A third way to heal the link of depression and spirituality and draw near to God is to love those around you.

Have you heard of the Golden Rule? Well it's golden because it is rich in wealth – wealth in the answer to a rich, rewarding life. The Golden Rule is "Love one another". God is perfect love and he asks us to love others too! Think of a time that someone did something nice for you. How did it make you feel? Your endorphins were released and you were happy! Now, think of a time you have done something nice for someone else. Especially a time that it made you feel happy to help someone. Can you imagine how different the world would be if we all helped each other and actually loved each other? Do you think depression would be as rampant in our society?

Once I began to reach out to others and care for them even in just little ways, my depression began to lift. God's Word teaches us to love others because God knows how wonderful this can be for our health and our world. The Golden Rule is excellent therapy! One woman aged 100, named Edna recently wrote: *"Volunteering gets you away from your own worries."*

Helping others is what God wants us all to do. He created us for relationship. **As our 6 Steps report revealed: social support is one of the key ingredients to curing depression.** The medical research has proven it. Loving can go both ways. To love and be loved is powerful depression treatment. **Warning: When I talk about beginning to loving others – I don't mean in a romantic relationship either.** We are healthy individuals when we can love others without having to expect love in return. It may seem impossible to have that attitude and it is; without God's love in our own lives. Let God love you and you will see the difference! Your love for others will be contagious! Perhaps romantic love will come to you but don't seek it. Seek loving God and as you are running towards God, you may find someone running alongside you that you could love too. That is the key to a lasting romantic relationship!

Back to loving others in the day to day...

If you truly don't know of anyone to reach out to and that you trust just yet, consider visiting an animal shelter or adopting a pet. Loving an animal with unconditional love in return such as a cat or dog, can be so wonderful! Just look at how powerful an animal program in elderly care homes and even prisons has been! I've always had a cat as long as I can remember and I realize how important this part of my life is. Loving others and animals has been a wonderful therapy keeping me from sliding into depression again.

All of these good things have all been proven by medical research because it works! God's Word works! It is a manual, a love letter, and a guidebook on how to live life with abundant joy! **Drawing near to God works because God is the thing that fills that emptiness and loneliness.** **Many of us try to fill this empty pain with other things** like alcohol or drugs, work, success, money, sex, food, vanity, academia, perfectionism, materialism, compulsive cleaning, and even religious legalism (preoccupation with rules and regulations of religion) rather than a relationship with God.

So, consider the most misunderstood relationship of depression and spirituality; suffering from a strained relationship with our loving God.

If you are taking care of yourself physically and emotionally and yet suffer from depression, then **you could be suffering from a separation from God who loves you and is reaching out his hand to you.** If only you'd let him help you with your problems, fears and worries.

If what you are doing now isn't working for you, what have you got to lose? Seek God and you will find him!

Consider again this ancient wisdom penned by Paul the Apostle in 60 A.D. in a letter to people in Turkey...

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you... And the God of all grace... will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

"The side effects of knowing God are awesome!"

My favourite reminder in my living room...

I asked a painter to paint me a picture of the changing moment when I called out to God in my desperation to always remind me of how powerful it was to admit my helplessness to him and to trust him. The painting helps me to never forget how far God has brought me since the darkness of depression. The painting now hangs above my fireplace in my living room for all to see. I get asked about it all the time and I get to tell my story. The painting is of 2 big arms open holding out to you inviting you to come into an embrace – God’s embrace. In the painting are small, slightly hidden words “Trust me” as God’s voice was quiet and gentle and comforting yet distinctly audible. They were sweet words that gave me hope and continue to do so daily!

My prayer for you is that you too can find this hope and allow God to take you in his arms and hold you and guide you through this journey toward healing.

Just for you, we’ve put a resource page together to compliment this e-book. Visit: <http://www.cure-your-depression.com/site-extras.html> for free resources and articles just for you!

There is hope! You are worth it!

Merri Ellen

www.cure-your-depression.com

"Research has revealed natural solutions to cure depression far superior and far safer than medication."

*"Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions." -
- Oliver Wendell Holmes "*

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