

Class 26 - Depression



Goals

In class 26 you will

- Understand more about depression and how to treat it spiritually
- Find out the causes of depression

Depression is a very serious condition.

This class is not designed to be a cure-all for everyone, but it is hoped it will help inspire with a spiritual approach.

Many times people with depression will feel helpless to change their current state, as though there is no point or that no-one can help. Depression often follows anger and helplessness. We quite often are literally beating ourselves up. Many times people that suffer from depression are extremely intelligent, very sensitive and compassionate people. Their sense of helplessness parallels the same spiral people suffering from anger travel into resentment and stress related illnesses (mentioned in [class 22- Anger](#)).

Depression is nourished by a lifetime of ungrieved and unforgiven hurts.

This spiral is especially negative as it is a process of 'swallowing down' or accepting negative energy into ourselves with no vent or route for it to be later transformed or released. Undealt with, this black hole spirals deeper and deeper until it eventually translates into all manner of mental, emotional or physical illnesses. Or ultimately to the point where the individual feels so powerless that there is no course except for the perceived ultimate cessation of this pain through suicide. From the spiritual point of view, nothing could be further from the truth. Ultimately there is no solution to the acceptance of negativity other than its transformation through some form of positivity.

"Self-acceptance is my refusal to be in an adversarial relationship to myself." -- Nathaniel Brand

We must recognise that depression like any illness presents itself as an imbalance. Some of us are genetically more prone, or perhaps our conditioning, the family and people around us that makes it more likely for us to suffer from depression. Given all that, spiritually, all illnesses, all imbalances are curable. But we need to be wise. Let us use all the help we can from all science can offer, but realise that more than perhaps any other disease, depression is uniquely only ever permanently cured by our own efforts spiritually. Our friends, doctors, parents and family may adopt significant roles in inspiring that process, but in the end we are infinitely more capable than we imagine of permanently healing our depression.

We have said before that the cause of all suffering is lack of love and of all happiness, the flow, or giving and receiving of love. This is a crucial precept to remember in treating depression.

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow." --- Melody Beattie



Manic depression episodes can strike at any time. One might be working or picking up the kids – whatever it might be and suddenly anxiety might begin to rise for no apparent reason, mentally, all sorts of turmoil and noise might begin to develop.



How do we become calm? Focussed? So that we might begin to arrest the rise of the negative turmoil, the anxiety and finally depression.

The simple answer is it is sometimes difficult to arrive at effortless meditation. It requires work to get to real silence. It is an act of faith to believe in yourself enough to know that ultimately you are responsible for your state of mind, that you can control you. For most of us, this is really hard work. And little successes need to be seen for the steps that they are to the ultimate mastery of our minds. Even more important, we must realise that our 'so-called' failures are steps too. It might take us 99 times of falling off a bicycle before on the 100th attempt we ride it. All 99 steps are important. We are explorers and we are charting places that we have not been to before.

But the rewards are magnificent.

It might sound simple. But to 'be in the moment' opens the door to every ultimate joy in life. When we are imprisoned by our past regrets or fears of the future, we lock away the key to our real self, to our soul and engross ourselves in the illusions of the ego. Real love, for example, real joy can only be experienced in the now.

"One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon - instead of enjoying the roses blooming outside our windows today." --Dale Carnegie

Depressed people are often self fixated, caught in regrets from the past or fears of the future and never in the present moment. They are usually imprisoned inside their own egos. Sometimes, like martyrs, we feel we must swallow all the negativity inside and not show it, so as not to affect others, that we can handle it. But the reality is that we swallow it down with nowhere to go.

We might also use language that accepts depression as a part of ourselves. We should continually reject it even in our words. Instead of 'I am a manic depressive' – transform it to 'I have the ultimate challenge of depression that I am in the process of curing', or 'sometimes I found myself working through depressive moments'.

The simplest cure-all to depression, if there is such a thing, is the cure all to everything and that is the flow of love. If when we are suffering from depression we are somehow able to get to experience the purest love, then depression would be just a distant memory. If we were able to release the darkness and replace it with the ultimate light, love, on an ongoing basis than a cure to our depression would be inevitable.

"In the midst of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer." -- Albert Camus

So if you really believe that you are capable of permanently healing your depression, then go about the process of practising the flow of love. You are never separate from love. You cannot escape it. It is your ultimate condition. Your most natural condition. So work with love. Really practise it. Not just a moment here and there, but really feel that you are offering love as often as you can.

Perhaps do some volunteer work where you have to test your unconditional offering of love. Remember that the highest love is for the most people and animals and nature with the least conditions. And realise that for you to receive love is also your most natural condition as the whole universe really is loving you at every moment. Look at anything with your heart for a minute or two and you will feel love flowing back to you.

We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope. - Martin Luther King

Also explore yourself in meditation. See what is making you feel helpless to change. What is imprisoning you? Investigate it. Perhaps you feel there is some one or some situation that needs to change for you to be happy. Recognise you are handing the power of your happiness to something outside of your control, which is not only incorrect, because your flow of love is the only thing that will make you happy, but it is also unbelievably unwise. See if there is someone that you have to forgive, perhaps it is you! Perhaps you are hanging onto resentments or anger. It might even be with fate or God. Let it all go and focus on the flow of love.

"I like living. I have sometimes been wildly, despairingly, acutely miserable, racked with sorrow, but through it all I still know that just to be alive is a grand thing." --Agatha Christie

Mantra meditations and affirmations are also extremely powerful for someone in a depressive state.

Whilst repetitive exercise such as walking or running will really help someone redevelop their mental strength and discipline utilised in meditation, whilst at the same time releasing the natural chemicals linked to feelings of well-being and contentment. Many studies emphasise the benefits of exercise such as regular jogging in treating depression.



<http://eurpub.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/cki159v1> and
http://www.clinical-depression.co.uk/Research/exercise_meditation.htm

A fantastic Australian organisation is Beyond Blue www.beyondblue.org.au Go to their website for more..

*In moments of discouragement, defeat, or even despair, there are always certain things to cling to. Little things usually: remembered laughter, the face of a sleeping child, a tree in the wind—in fact, any reminder of something deeply felt or dearly loved. No man is so poor as not to have many of these small candles. When they are lighted, darkness goes away—and a touch of wonder remains. - **tombstone inscription in Britain***

Exercise 26 - Affirmations



Affirmations and mantras are probably the most powerful meditation exercise during times of crisis such as manic depressive and/or anxiety attacks. Try and get yourself some time and if possible, space, and try these affirmations;

1. I am solely responsible for my happiness and I choose to be happy by freely and unconditionally offering and receiving love.
2. I am in the flow of love.
3. I forgive anyone and everyone that I have not yet forgiven. But in the future I will not blame so I shall never need to forgive again.
4. Every negativity in my life has only one solution, to be made a plus by adding positivity.
5. I release all demands of anyone or anything including myself. I am safe and secure in the flow of love.
6. Gratitude. (Receive love)
 - i. I am grateful in this moment for these seven places.
 - ii. I am grateful in this moment for these seven things.
 - iii. I am grateful in this moment for these seven people.
7. Empowerment (offer love)
 - i. I offer love unconditionally to these 7 places.
 - ii. I offer love unconditionally to these 7 things.
 - iii. I offer love unconditionally to these 7 people.
8. The turning point in my life has come. I am open and receptive to living the life I love.