

# **Depression Sucks!**

## **50 Non-Medical Strategies for Coping with Depression**

**By Bob Litt**

If you or someone you know needs help, call 1-800-273-8255 for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Or you can text HOME to 741-741 for free, 24-hour support from the Crisis Text Line. (After July 2022 you can also reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by dialing 988)

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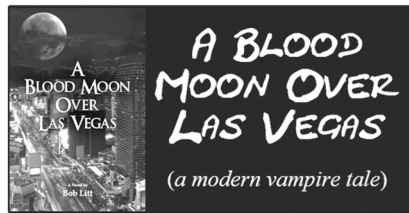
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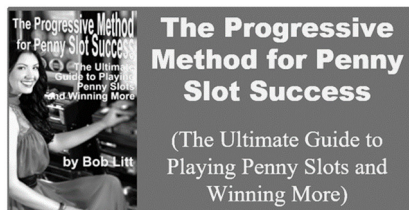


A Blood Moon Over Las Vegas is a modern, adult, vampire tale that chronicles the Las Vegas clan: An extended family that requires human blood to survive, and sex to bind them together. (Contains adult content)



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The Progressive Method for Penny Slot Success is an easy-to-follow system that will increase your chances of winning more money, playing longer and having more fun. Penny Slots are, by far, the most popular casino game. Why not? They're entertaining, loads of fun, have great designs and (if you use the Progressive Method) there's always the chance you might win some money.

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# Preface

I hope that the 50 Strategies in this book will help you, or someone you know, cope with Depression.

You may feel the urge to jump right to the 50 Strategies, but I strongly encourage you to first read the Introduction and the section on How to Use This Book. This will give you a better overview of what you will find here.

As of this writing, this book is being sold exclusively by Amazon.

You probably know that authors, like me, love to receive your reviews.

Whether or not you purchased the printed version or the eBook, would you be kind enough to write a review.

Good reviews are more than welcome. But even bad reviews are helpful to me when writing the next version of this book.

Thank you for reading.

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# Introduction

## *(Read This)*

*Telling a depressed person to be happy is like telling a cancer patient to cure themselves.*

**– Unknown Author**

Going through depression can be difficult. Thankfully, there is absolutely no shame in seeking out medical help. But not everyone wants to go that route. Fortunately, there are some non-medical activities that can help. That's what this book is about: 50 Non-Medical Strategies for Coping with Depression.

Regrettably, depression is a way-too-common disorder that, I have to admit, I have suffered from myself. However, I have discovered that there are certain behaviors that help me to deal with this condition. My hope is that they will help you as well.

I am writing this during the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020-22 (and I am writing from my own personal perspective). That alone is cause to be depressed. But I have my own reasons to feel that way, and my own problems, that I will tell you about.

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However, this morning I am feeling pretty good. I've been following my own advice: I managed to finish a large project I was working on; I just had a nap; and now I am having a comfort food snack. Compared to yesterday, I can almost say that I feel euphoric.

I feel energized and actually want to do things. I cleaned up some things in the kitchen, put away some groceries that I bought yesterday, and I am actually sitting at my desk writing.

I have no idea how long this feeling will last. From past experience I will guess that it may be anywhere from a couple of hours to a few short days.

My depression will return. I know it. Depression is always lurking just around the corner. Depression is insidious. Depression Sucks!

## ***My Overview of Depression***

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Depression is a common mental disorder. It's estimated that 16 million adults in the United States (about 6.7 percent of the population), experience at least one major depressive episode each year.

Symptoms of depression can range from mild to severe. They can be chronic, or they can occur as one-time episodes caused by traumatic life events, such as a death or illness in the family, the ending of a marriage, or financial difficulties.

Some symptoms of depression include the following personality changes:



- Leisure activities – you have reduced interest in activities that are normally pleasurable
- Sleep patterns – you have either developed insomnia, an increased need for sleep, or you’re constantly incredibly fatigued
- Work habits – you are working long hours or not at all
- Appetite – a lack of appetite or an increased need to eat, leading to either weight loss or gain
- Energy level – lack of energy and fatigue, restlessness, irritability, or aggressiveness making you extremely sensitive to rejection
- Trouble Concentrating – even on tasks you usually perform well
- Poor Self-Image – causing you to skip self-care habits
- Your libido – too low, or in some cases overactive
- Suicidal thoughts – wishing to harm yourself or others

Any one, or two, of these (except for the last item) may be temporary reactions to a stressful situation and may change back on their own. Never jump to conclusions. If you are concerned about these types of personality changes, please ask a trained medical professional.

## ***Is it Live or is it Memorex\* - Adjustment Disorder***

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Depression is a real medical condition. Only a trained medical professional should apply that diagnosis. That being said, the word “depression” is a term that has become part of our

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common vernacular and is widely used by non-professionals to refer to anyone who is feeling down.

*\* Back in 1971, the Memorex company produced an audio cassette tape (we're talking before CDs) that they said reproduced sounds that were as good as listening to a live performance. They used the catch phrase, "Is it Live or is it Memorex?" In a ubiquitous TV commercial, they recorded the singer Ella Fitzgerald singing a note that shattered a wine glass. When they played the Memorex tape, the recording still shattered a glass.*

*The phrase, "Is it Live or is it Memorex?" came to be perceived as asking if something was real or a faked reproduction.*

While someone may actually be depressed, medical professionals will tell you that the more likely situation is that a patient suffers from what medical professionals call Adjustment Disorder.

But, as far as most people are concerned, it doesn't matter what you call it: Depression, Adjustment Disorder, Bi-Polar, being Unconsolably Sad, or simply Feeling Down. They just feel bad and are unable to cope. In this book I am using the word "depression" very loosely. I am going to take the liberty of calling all of the conditions I just listed as "Depression."

I am not a medical professional (more on that in a little bit). In this book, my goal is to try to help you to make your life more bearable by giving you 50 Strategies that (I hope) will allow you to deal with the way you are feeling.

Okay, back to Adjustment Disorder. What is it?

An adjustment disorder is a type of disability that develops after someone has been exposed to a trigger. It is a reaction, either behavioral or emotional, to a stressful event or change

in a person's life (also called a life stressor). The adjustment disorder makes it difficult, or impossible, for a person to cope with certain situations. The reaction usually occurs within three months of the stressful event. Stressors can be life changes, work-related problems, loss of a loved one, or relationship issues. People who encounter a trigger situation at work may be unable to spend any significant amount of time in the workplace due to their disability.

Adjustment Disorders can also affect children. Stressors for them can be a family move, their parents' divorce or separation, the loss of a pet, the birth of a sibling, or a sudden illness.

How common is it? Pretty common. In the United States there are more than 200,000 cases diagnosed each year. Does diagnosis require a lab test or brain scan? No.

Is it treatable? Yes, by a medical professional. How long does it take to recover? The length of an adjustment disorder can vary: 6 months or less is considered acute; more than 6 months is chronic. Symptoms should ease once the stressor is removed. Brief professional treatment may also help symptoms disappear sooner.

What are the symptoms of Adjustment Disorder?

Some emotional signs of adjustment disorder are: sadness, hopelessness, not enjoying things you used to enjoy, crying spells, worrying, nervousness, anxiety, desperation, feeling jittery, feeling overwhelmed, performing poorly in school or work, and thoughts of suicide.

# *Anxiety – Depression’s Evil Twin*

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So now you know that adjustment disorder is another condition that is mistaken for Depression. Still another, masquerading as Depression, is Anxiety.

The symptoms are very similar but there is a difference. Depression is usually caused by events in the past, Anxiety is caused by events that haven’t happened yet – the future.

(All this time I thought I was just depressed. Turns out I was wrong; I was Depressed **and** Anxious.)

When a frightening, new, unpleasant or unexpected situation presents itself, our brains appropriately raise a signal that there might be danger. This is done by the Amygdala, a part of our reptilian brain. Our basic instincts cause us to go into (1) flight, (2) fight or (3) freeze.

Number 3 is my reaction: Freezing and being unable to accomplish anything. I used to think I was lazy and just a procrastinator. But, after years of self-reflection I’ve realized that there is so much more to it.

I become overwhelmed with what needs to be done. The other side of the same coin is not being able to think of anything at all. My mind goes blank.

## *High Anxiety*

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They (who are they?) say that it is impossible to think of two things at the same time. So, what happens when your mind is sending you reminders about what you’ve experienced,

reviewing the thoughts and actions of the day, trying to prioritize what still needs to be done, making plans for the future? Can you concentrate on two things, three, five, a dozen? The answer is “no.”

In my career I have acted as a project manager. A good PM will break down the major task to be accomplished into 100 little tasks. So, when I am presented with a new project, I don’t just think of it as one task that needs to be accomplished, I think of it as dozens of things that need to be completed.

I can deal with one thing, but dozens, hundreds? It’s overwhelming. So overwhelming, that I wind up not doing anything. Of course, that makes me depressed and makes the whole situation worse.

## ***Full Disclosure***

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It’s time for full disclosure. I am in no way a medical professional. Neither have I conducted any independent research on “depression.”

What I am is an observer of life. In my career I have done a lot of business analysis. I have used those same skills to figure out things in my personal life.

Because I am not a medical professional, I use the term “depression” very loosely.

If you think you are really depressed, please see a medical professional, a psychiatrist or an analyst.