
CHAPTER 17

Depression

Depression is a frequently used and abused term. When someone asks you what is wrong as they look at your gloomy face, you might respond, “I feel depressed about myself, about my life.” Everyone is down in the dumps some of the time, but most people, after a few hours, days, or weeks, snap out of their despondent moods.

However, some people are not as fortunate. They suffer from major depression, a mood disorder that involves feeling deeply unhappy, demoralized, self-derogatory, and apathetic. A person who has major depression often does not feel physically well, loses stamina, has a poor appetite, is listless, and experiences a sleep disorder. Major depression is so common in the United States that it has been called the flu of mental disorders. (The extreme mood swings of bipolar disorder, or manic-depression, are covered in Chapter 10).

Just as with anxiety, there is a swirl of controversy about the etiology and treatment of depression. Some experts believe that most depressions are psychologically and experientially determined and therefore best treated through psychotherapy. Others believe that depression is largely biologically determined and should be treated mainly with medication. But all experts acknowledge the reciprocal interaction of both psychology and physiology, and most believe in the superiority of a combination of medication and psychotherapy.

In this chapter, we critically review the voluminous body of self-help books, autobiographies, films, and Internet resources related to depression. Our primary concern is with major depression, but we also cover seasonal affective disorder (SAD), dysthymia, and postpartum depression.

SELF-HELP BOOKS

Strongly Recommended

★★★★★ *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy* (revised ed., 1999) by David Burns. New York: Avon.

The cognitive therapy that psychiatrist Burns describes in this updated self-help classic is the most popular form of psychological treatment for depression. Cognitive thera-

RECOMMENDATION HIGHLIGHTS

Self-Help Books

- For alleviating depression through cognitive-behavioral methods:
 - ★★★★★ *Feeling Good* by David Burns
 - ★★★★★ *The Feeling Good Handbook* by David Burns
 - ★★★★★ *Mind Over Mood* by Dennis Greenberger and Christine A. Padesky
 - ★★★★★ *Control Your Depression* by Peter Lewinsohn et al.
 - ★★★★★ *Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders* by Aaron Beck
- For reducing depression by brief and practical directives:
 - ★★★★ *When Living Hurts* by Michael D. Yapko
- For converting depression into new sources of growth:
 - ★★★★ *When Feeling Bad Is Good* by Ellen McGrath
- For treating seasonal affective disorders:
 - ★★★ *Winter Blues: Seasonal Affective Disorder* by Norman E. Rosenthal
- For identifying and remediating men's depression:
 - ★★★ *I Don't Want to Talk about It* by Terrence Real
- For helping parents cope with teenager's depression:
 - ◆ *Overcoming Teen Depression* by Miriam Kaufman

Autobiographies

- For sensitive descriptions of severe depression and near suicide:
 - ★★★★★ *Darkness Visible* by William Styron
 - ★★★★ *Undercurrents* by Martha Manning
 - ★★★ *The Beast* by Tracy Thompson
- For a personal yet comprehensive look at depression:
 - ★★★ *The Noonday Demon* by Andrew Solomon

Films

- For a harrowing and systemic portrait of depression:
 - ★★★★ *A Woman under the Influence*

Internet Resources

- For accurate and comprehensive information on depression:
 - ★★★★★ *Dr. Ivan's Depression Central*
<http://www.psycom.net/depression.central.html>
 - ★★★★★ *Wing of Madness* <http://www.wingofmadness.com>
 - ★★★★ *Psychology Information Online: Depression*
<http://www.psychologyinfo.com/depression>

- For medication and/or psychotherapy for mood disorders:
 - ★★★★★ *Are You Considering Medication for Depression?*
<http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/booklets/meds/meds.html>
 - ★★★★★ *Psychotherapy versus Medication for Depression*
<http://www.apa.org/journals/anton.html>
- For information on cognitive-behavioral therapy:
 - ★★★★★ *The Cognitive Therapy Pages*
<http://www.habitsmart.com/cogtitle.html>
 - ★★★★★ *Cognitive Behavior Therapy*
<http://www.cognitive-behavior-therapy.org>
- For understanding depression in children:
 - ★★★★★ *Depression in Children and Adolescents* <http://www.klis.com/chandler/pamphlet/dep/depressionpamphlet.htm>

pists believe that people become depressed because of faulty thinking that triggers self-destructive moods. Examples of faulty thinking are all-or-nothing thinking (if a situation is anything less than perfect, it is a total failure), discounting the positive (positive experiences don't count), magnification (exaggerating the importance of problems and shortcomings), and personalization (taking personal responsibility for events that aren't entirely under one's control). In *Feeling Good*, Burns outlines techniques people can use to identify and combat their faulty thinking. These techniques have been extensively tested in published research studies; indeed, this is one of the few books in the entire self-help literature that can boast about its demonstrated effectiveness (Ackerson, Scogin, McKendree-Smith, & Lyman, 1998; Cuijpers, 1997). It is peppered with self-assessment tests, self-help forms, and charts. The self-assessment techniques include the widely used Beck Depression Inventory, an anger scale, and a dysfunctional attitudes scale. The self-help forms and charts include a daily record of dysfunctional thoughts, an antiprocrationation sheet, a pleasure-predicting sheet, an anger cost-benefit analysis, and an antiperfection sheet. Updated in 1999 with a new section on antidepressant medications, this was the highest-rated book in the depression category of our national studies. An outstanding self-help book that has sold more than 2 million copies since its original publication in 1980, Burns's easy-to-read writing style, extensive use of examples, and enthusiasm give readers a clear understanding of cognitive therapy and the confidence to try its techniques.

★★★★★ *The Feeling Good Handbook* (revised ed., 1999) by David Burns. New York: Plume.

In this sequel to *Feeling Good*, Burns says that one of the most exciting recent developments is the discovery that cognitive therapy, which he calls the new mood therapy, can help people with the entire range of mood problems they encounter in their everyday lives. These include feelings of insecurity and inferiority, procrastination, guilt, stress, frustration, and irritability. In this handbook, Burns explains why we are

plagued by irrational worries and how to conquer our worst fears without having to rely on addictive tranquilizers or alcohol. Burns also describes the important application of cognitive therapy in recent years to problems in personal relationships, especially marital and couple relationships. *The Feeling Good Handbook* asks readers to complete a number of self-assessment tests once a week, just as patients do, to monitor progress. The tests ask about thoughts, feelings, and actions in a variety of circumstances that typically make people feel angry, sad, frustrated, or anxious. There are two main differences in *The Feeling Good Handbook* and the original book: It covers a wider array of problems (anxiety and relationships, as well as depression), and includes daily logs to fill out. This five-star resource can be used as an adjunct to *Feeling Good* or independent of it. In either case, it is a very valuable and prized self-help book.

★★★★★ *Mind Over Mood: Change How You Feel by Changing the Way You Think* (1995) by Dennis Greenberger and Christine A. Padesky. New York: Guilford Press.

The authors have taken the nuts and bolts of cognitive therapy and spelled out in a step-by-step fashion how a layperson can utilize these methods in dealing with depression, anxiety, guilt, and shame. Strategies described in this book can also help people solve relationship problems, handle stress better, improve self-esteem, and become less fearful and more confident. The book helps people identify and make necessary changes in the relationship among thoughts, emotions, behavior, body changes, and events in their lives. Each chapter contains practice exercises. This five-star cognitive therapy manual can be truly helpful for adults suffering from depressive complaints—truly a matter of “mind over mood.”

★★★★★ *Control Your Depression* (1996) by Peter Lewinsohn, Ricardo Munoz, Mary Ann Youngren, and Antonette Zeiss. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

This self-help resource, also in the cognitive-behavioral tradition, is intended to teach a way of thinking about depression as well as controlling it. The book is divided into three parts: Part I explains how depressed people think; Part II provides step-by-step procedures to control depression; and Part III is about ensuring success. Techniques include self-control, relaxation, planning pleasant activities, and modifying self-defeating thinking patterns. There are illustrations of how to gauge progress, maintain gains, and determine the need for further help. *Control Your Depression* has been shown in controlled research to work effectively in many cases (Cuijpers, 1998). This five-star resource is a solid, research-based self-help book for treating depression.

★★★★★ *Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders* (1976) by Aaron Beck. New York: International Universities Press.

This text, as the title implies, presents a cognitive therapy approach to depression and other emotional disorders. Aaron Beck pioneered the cognitive therapy approach to depression. He describes the cognitive triad, which consists of negative thoughts about the self, ongoing experience, and the future. Beck believes that systematic errors in thinking, each of which darkens the person's experiences, produce depression. These errors include drawing a conclusion when there is little or no evidence to support it; fo-

ocusing on an insignificant detail while ignoring the more important features of a situation; drawing global conclusions about worth or performance on the basis of a single fact; magnifying small bad events and minimizing large good events; and incorrectly engaging in self-blame for bad events. Cognitive therapy attempts to counter these distorted thoughts. People are taught to identify and correct the flawed thinking, and are trained to conquer problems and master situations they previously thought were insurmountable. This valuable five-star book was written primarily for professionals rather than a self-help audience. Many of the ideas in Beck's book are presented in a much easier to read fashion in Burns's *Feeling Good* and Greenberger and Padesky's *Mind Over Mood*. Beck's book will thus appeal primarily to the clinical community and to the knowledgeable layperson.

★★★★ *When Living Hurts: Directives for Treating Depression* (1994) by Michael D. Yapko. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

This book addresses brief and practical methods for treating depression. Yapko believes that depression can be managed, and that when it is well-managed, it doesn't hurt as much or as long. He gives directives and strategies intended to help the clinician intervene actively and provide catalysts for learning to interrupt the cycle of depression. The first part of the book provides a theoretical overview; the second part describes 91 directives; and the third part presents case narratives that illustrate applications of the directives. This excellent, four-star book is largely a reference volume for clinicians; if a client were to use it as a self-help resource, it should probably be used in conjunction with a professional. Yapko's *Breaking the Patterns of Depression* (reviewed below) is a more conventional self-help book.

★★★★ *When Feeling Bad Is Good* (1994) by Ellen McGrath. New York: Bantam.

This book provides a program for women to convert "healthy depression" into new sources of growth. McGrath challenges the cultural myth that feeling bad must necessarily be negative and introduces a new perspective on women's depression. A woman's healthy depression may be a realistic and appropriate emotional response to the unhealthy culture in which she lives. McGrath identifies six types of healthy depression: victimization depression, relationship depression, age-range depression, depletion depression, body image depression, and mind-body depression. This valuable four-star book is appropriate for women of all ages, ethnicities, and socioeconomic strata.

Recommended

★★★ *You Can Beat Depression: A Guide to Prevention and Recovery* (3rd ed., 2001) by John Preston. San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact.

In the third edition of this valuable book, the author helps readers appreciate that all depression is not alike (for example, chronic vs. acute depression). After providing a clearer understanding of depression, Preston guides readers through various treatment choices, such as brief therapy, self-help approaches, family therapy, medication, and cognitive changes. Relapse prevention programs are also addressed for the person

working to maintain or improve gains. This three-star book would actually be a four-star selection if not for the fact that relatively few mental health professionals rated it. A very useful resource for people trying to understand and make choices about treating their depression.

★★★ *Winter Blues—Seasonal Affective Disorder: What It Is and How to Overcome It* (1998) by Norman E. Rosenthal. New York: Guilford Press.

A book for patients, spouses, and family members who wish to better understand and cope with seasonal affective disorders (SADs). Psychiatrist Rosenthal begins with a self-test to evaluate the level of SAD and then reviews the effectiveness of antidepressant medication, light therapy, St. John's wort, and a nutritional regimen. Light therapy, the author's research area, is particularly favored. There is also a step-by-step guide on coping with SADs all year round. This is probably the best self-help book on SADs.

★★★ *Getting Un-Depressed: How a Woman Can Change Her Life through Cognitive Therapy* (revised ed., 1988) by Gary Emery. New York: Touchstone.

The cognitive therapy approach of this book is designed to help women cope effectively with depression. Women's risk of developing depression is about double that of men. Emery explains what depression is and how cognitive therapy can help. He describes how women can get immediate relief from their symptoms and improve their state of mind. Next, the author focuses on ways to overcome common complications of depression (weight gain, alcohol and drug dependence, and relationship problems). After this, women learn that they can avoid future depression by working on the psychological causes of depression, which, according to Emery, are underlying negative beliefs and ineffective ways of handling stress. Finally, Emery outlines how women can lead more self-reliant and self-directed lives. This three-star book, just missing the four-star rating, is a popular and practical application of cognitive therapy to depression for women.

★★★ *I Don't Want to Talk about It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression* (1997) by Terrence Real. New York: Scribner.

Feeling the stigma of depression's "unmanliness," many men hide their condition not only from family and friends but also from themselves. Real believes that by directing their pain outward, depressed men hurt the people they love and frequently pass their condition on to their children. Real mixes in his own experiences with depression, as a son of a depressed, violent father and the father of two young sons. By integrating personal and professional experiences, Real teaches men how they can unearth their pain, heal themselves, restore relationships, and break the legacy of abuse. A useful self-help book specifically for men.

★★★ *How to Stubbornly Refuse to Make Yourself Miserable about Anything, Yes Anything!* (1988) by Albert Ellis. New York: Lyle Stuart.

This internationally respected psychologist, originator of Rational-Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT), contends that we create our own feelings and choose to think and feel in self-harming ways. Ellis's goals here are to show people how to express and control their emotional destinies, how to stubbornly refuse to make themselves miserable, how

to use scientific reasoning, and how to effectively change their emotional and behavioral problems. The book certainly covers depression and misery, but it is broader in its coverage. This three-star book can be helpful for laypersons who are self-motivated or already involved in cognitive-behavior therapy.

★★★ *Hand-Me-Down Blues: How to Stop Depression from Spreading in Families* (1999) by Michael D. Yapko. New York: Golden.

The family is a powerful system, both for unwittingly teaching depression and for helping to overcome it. Psychologist Yapko advocates a shift away from medications as the sole solution for depression toward the curative role of family therapy. He emphasizes that “depression can be relieved with a family approach as family members are brought together to relieve their distress by learning to help each other and to avoid blame as the whole family reacts to depression.” A realistic and family approach to the management of depression.

★★★ *Overcoming Depression: A Cognitive Therapy Approach for Taming the Depression BEAST* (1999) by Mark Gilson and Arthur Freeman. Albany, NY: Graywind. (Also distributed by the Psychological Corporation.)

The depression BEAST is a treatment acronym: one chapter addresses “B” for body and biology; “E” for emotions; “A” for action; “S” for situations and vulnerability; and “T” for thoughts. A final chapter focuses on the role of hope. The book adopts an integrative but largely cognitive perspective in the treatment of depression. It is educational, easy to read, and quite practical. A useful self-help resource for depressed persons and their families.

★★★ *How to Cope with Depression* (1989, reprinted 1996) by Raymond DePaulo and Keith Ablow. New York: Ballantine.

Subtitled *A Complete Guide for You and Your Family*, this book is primarily about the biological causes of depression and the treatment of depression through drug therapy. Part I, Depression: What We Know, defines depression and bipolar disorder (the authors call it manic-depressive illness) and describes the causes of depression as biological. Part II, The Experience of Depression, portrays the nature of depression from the perspective of the patient, the family, and the physician. Part III, The Four Perspectives of Depression, evaluates the disease perspective, the personality perspective, the behavior perspective, and the life-story perspective, and Part IV, Current Treatments, presents the authors’ view of how depression should be treated. This three-star book was not widely known in our studies, and its title notwithstanding, it is less a guide to coping with depression than a primer on possible causes, treatments, and professional perspectives. The authors make clear their own view: Depression is a physical disease with genetic and biological causes that can be successfully treated only through drug therapy. Other therapies are given token discussion.

★★★ *When the Blues Won't Go Away* (1991) by Robert Hirschfeld. New York: Macmillan.

This book concerns one form of depression—dysthymic disorder—that is long-lasting and relatively mild. In the early chapters, Hirschfeld describes the rut that people with

dysthymic disorder (DD) get themselves into and what they do to stay in that rut. Many characteristics of DD resemble those of major depression, but DD's symptoms are less severe and usually last longer. People with DD continue to function at home and work, but not at the level they once did. Most of the book is devoted to getting rid of DD, and Hirschfeld does an excellent job of presenting a variety of treatment strategies. The author outlines self-help strategies and tailor-made therapies for such problems. He also discusses antidepressant medications and shows how a combination of drug therapy and psychotherapy can be effective. This three-star resource came out just before one of our studies was conducted, so only a small number of mental health professionals rated it. We believe that *When the Blues Won't Go Away* provides a well-balanced analysis of a specific type of depression—long-lasting, relatively mild depression.

★★★ *Breaking the Patterns of Depression* (1997) by Michael D. Yapko. New York: Doubleday.

The author's dual foci are the initial treatment and the prevention of depressive disorders. Yapko provides over 100 activities to help learn the skills necessary for becoming and remaining depression-free. Readers are asked to participate in the activities listed in each chapter. Action steps are emphasized throughout.

★★★ *Understanding and Overcoming Depression: A Common Sense Approach* (1999) by Tony Bates. Freedom, CA: Crossing.

The author offers a heartwarming message that builds self-esteem and gives us trust in ourselves. In 128 pages, Bates overviews the signs and causes of depression, and argues that hopelessness is the major obstacle to overcoming depression. The recovery plan includes cognitive work on self-image and a relapse prevention/maintenance plan. Pharmacological and psychotherapy are briefly addressed. A useful and—as the title declares—common sense self-help book.

★★★ *Listening to Prozac* (1997) by Peter D. Kramer. New York: Penguin.

This best-selling author guides us into the scientific study of biology and personality. Kramer explains the historical debate over what drives us as human beings—nature versus nurture. He then shares his psychiatric and philosophical observations about the influence of a medication such as Prozac on a patient's outlook and self-image. His focus is limited mainly to explaining the impact of mood-altering drugs on the modern sense of self: What is Prozac's influence on personality, work performance, memory, dexterity? Does it affect character rather than illness? For the professional and the layperson interested in the ongoing debates about mind versus body and nature versus nurture, this is a stimulating read. However, it is not intended as a self-help guide.

Diamond in the Rough

◆ *Overcoming Teen Depression: A Guide for Parents* (2001) by Miriam Kaufman. Buffalo, NY: Firefly.

This self-help book was explicitly written for the parents of depressed teenagers. The author reviews the signs of teen depression, its various types, comorbid conditions, and

suicide risks. She usefully discusses indications for psychotherapy, selection of a therapist, the purposes of psychopharmacology, and the possibilities of alternative treatments, such as herbal medicines. It is a practical and reassuring book for parents and family members. If *Overcoming Teen Depression* had been read by more experts in our national studies, it would have certainly received a rating of three or more stars.

Not Recommended

★★ *You Mean I Don't Have to Feel This Way?* (1991) by Colette Dowling. New York: Scribner.

★ *The Good News about Depression: Cures and Treatments in the New Age of Psychiatry* (revised ed., 1995) by Mark S. Gold. New York: Villard.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Strongly Recommended

★★★★★ *Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness* (1992) by William Styron. New York: Vintage.

In beautifully written prose, novelist William Styron describes his gradual recognition of debilitating depression, his descent into despair, his suicidal impulses, hospitalization, and recovery. In one of the best portrayals of the loneliness and despair of major depression ever written, the book illustrates the benefits of brief hospitalization; "For me," Styron writes, "the real helpers were seclusion and time" afforded by brief hospital stays. This book is widely known and very positively evaluated in our national studies—and short enough to be read by someone suffering from depression.

★★★★★ *Undercurrents: A Therapist's Reckoning with Her Own Depression* (1994) by Martha Manning. San Francisco: Harper.

In her late 30s, psychotherapist Manning experienced a severe unipolar depression. Symptoms included sleep disturbance, lack of energy, and suicidal impulses. Neither psychotherapy nor drugs seemed to help. Reluctantly, she underwent electric shock therapy (EST), described in detail, which lifted the depression. Afterwards, she learned that it was difficult to convince her colleagues and her friends that EST was a beneficial treatment. The book takes some of the fear out of EST and demonstrates how the experience of depression can deepen understanding of the human condition. Manning writes, "In these flashes of insight, I understand for a moment that one of the great dividends of darkness is an increased sensitivity to light." A very sensitive account by a therapist who was compelled to switch roles and become a patient.

★★★★★ *Leaves from Many Seasons: Selected Papers* (1983) by O. Hobart Mowrer. New York: Praeger.

As a psychologist, the author is best known for his research on learning. This book is a collection of his essays, one of which describes his history of depressive episodes. The first occurred when he was a freshman in high school, the second when he graduated

from college and entered graduate school (where he tried psychoanalysis), the third as a postgraduate fellow when he began teaching at Yale, and again, in Washington, DC (where he again tried psychoanalysis). The last depression episode occurred when he was at the pinnacle of his career, as president-elect of the American Psychological Association. He became a voluntary patient at a small Chicago psychiatric hospital. This last episode was the beginning of Mowrer's interest in the relation between religion and psychopathology. Although the book received a four-star rating from professionals, the fact that only a single chapter concerns his depression limits the usefulness of the book as a self-help resource for depression.

Recommended

★★★ *The Beast: A Journey through Depression* (1996) by Tracy Thompson. New York: Plume.

Drawing on notes in a journal she kept from adolescence onward and her considerable research skills as a reporter for the *Washington Post*, Thompson writes of her struggles with the depression, suicidal thoughts, and inner demons that have been with her since adolescence. She was treated with psychotherapy and various drugs, including Prozac and imipramine. A compassionate and well-written account, told with candor that captures the emotional depths of depression, the book is particularly useful in showing that one can have a serious, chronic depression and still maintain a successful career. Very high but infrequent rating by the mental health experts in our studies resulted in the three stars.

★★★ *The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression* (2002) by Andrew Solomon. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Superbly written and well researched, this combined memoir and compendium by National Book Award winner Andrew Solomon has become an instant classic on depression. His own serious bouts of depression, his desire to end his life, and the many treatments he had undergone led him to explore the condition in medical, historical, and cross-cultural contexts. He interviewed psychotherapists and researchers, other people with depression, drug makers, and philosophers, and read accounts of famous literary figures who had serious depression. To understand the many expressions of depression, he visited mental hospitals and traveled to Senegal, Cambodia, and Greenland. The book covers both unipolar and bipolar disorders, and describes treatment modalities across the spectrum, including drugs, talk therapies, alternative herbal and homeopathic remedies, diet and exercise, and electroconvulsive therapy. Concluding with a chapter titled "Hope," this moving, empathic, and comprehensive work is a milestone among books on depression. Although its average rating would have merited five stars, this autobiography is not yet widely known and did not collect sufficient ratings for a five-star designation.

★★★ *On the Edge of Darkness* (1995) by Kathy Cronkite. New York: Dell.

Following her own bout with depression, Kathy Cronkite undertook research into the disorder and produced this combination autobiography and self-help book. Most of the

book involves interviews with celebrities who have suffered from depression, including Mike Wallace, Kitty Dukakis, Rod Steiger, and William Styron. Cronkite also talked to researchers and describes therapeutic options for adults and children with depression. The interviewees recommend seeking treatment sooner rather than later, because untreated depression is likely to worsen, bringing with it risks of suicide. Learning that successful people have suffered from the disorder and come through the experience will benefit many readers, especially in overcoming the “No one has ever felt like this before” feelings so typical of serious depression.

★★★ *The Bell Jar* (1995) by Sylvia Plath. Cutchogue, NY: Buccaneer.

Plath was a prize-winning poet who received much acclaim during her lifetime and afterward. This autobiographical novel, published only a month before her suicide in 1963, recounts the young woman’s hospitalization for severe depression while she was a summer intern at a New York City magazine. She was given shock treatments and spent time in private psychiatric hospitals. Her multiple hospitalizations left her fearful of treatment, especially shock treatment. The book is regarded as a literary classic in its sensitive description of inner pain so great that it leads to suicide. This is not a hopeful book—Plath’s tragic end is already known—but it can awaken readers to danger signs in themselves and others.

Diamond in the Rough

◆ *Composing Myself: A Journey through Postpartum Depression* (1998) by Fiona Shaw. South Royalton, VT: Steerforth.

Composing Myself is a autobiographical journey into a depression after the birth of the author’s second child. The chronic nature of the depression led the author to hospitalization and extended psychiatric care. During this process, her childhood alienation, loneliness, and estranged parental relationship came to the surface; the story of her life was intertwined with her adult experience of postpartum depression. The literary ability of the author is evident in the expressive narrative her story takes. This book is written to provide a familiar voice and story to those who suffer postpartum depression and feel isolated, unique, and misunderstood. The author’s perspective, coupled with the recent publication date, qualify this book as a Diamond in the Rough.

Not Recommended

★★ *Prozac Nation: Young and Depressed in America* (1997) by Elizabeth Wurtzel. New York: Riverhead.

FILMS

Strongly Recommended

★★★★ *A Woman under the Influence* (1974) directed by John Cassavetes. R rating. 155 minutes.

A harrowing film that charts the emotional breakdown of a housewife and the effects of her depression on her blue-collar family. Peter Falk plays a distant, inexpressive con-

struction worker flummoxed by the fragile mental condition of his wife, Gena Rowlands. When her condition threatens the well-being of their children, he has her committed to a psychiatric hospital for several months. The film poignantly demonstrates one person's sense of depressive desperation, a partner's inability to provide emotional support, and the devastating consequences. The heart wrenching performances leave a lasting impression.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Metasites

★★★★★ *Wing of Madness: A Depression Guide* <http://www.wingofmadness.com>

An enormous collection of sensible and accurate information, with many clearly organized sections and links, designed for laypersons. A pleasure to explore. Support, personal experiences, advice, links, and so on.

★★★★★ *Dr. Ivan's Depression Central*
<http://www.psycom.net/depression.central.html>

Offers about a million links, papers, and other materials under about 70 headings. Many are by Ivan K. Goldberg, MD, an expert on psychopharmacology. Although the site is medication-oriented, some subjects are free of this emphasis (e.g., Grief and Bereavement, Psychotherapy for People with Depression). Most materials are aimed at professionals and the sophisticated, but some can be used as introductory materials.

★★★★★ *Psychology Information Online: Depression*
<http://www.psychologyinfo.com/depression>

A very large site, organized by psychologists, full of accurate information about diagnosis, cognitive therapy, SAD, medication, and many other topics. Many articles are quite short but may be useful for people needing an overview. This is a product of Donald J. Franklin, PhD, and offers his *National Directory of Psychologists*.

★★★★★ *Internet Mental Health: Major Depressive Disorder*
<http://www.mentalhealth.com/fr20.html>

Click on Depression in the column on the left. The site has about a hundred clinically useful and educational papers, ranging from consensus guidelines to personal stories of recovery.

Psychoeducational Materials for Clients and Families

General Sites on Depression

★★★★★ *Depression* <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/depressionmenu.cfm>

From the National Institute of Mental Health, this page offers a dozen brochures organized by audience (adolescents, employers, senior citizens, and women) and by topic (bipolar disorder, suicide, comorbidity, etc.).

- ★★★★★ *Depression in Children and Adolescents: What It Is and What to Do about It* by Jim Chandler, MD

<http://www.klis.com/chandler/pamphlet/dep/depressionpamphlet.htm>

About 20 pages of solid information and some vignettes written for the public and teens. The section What Can be Done? is about behavioral interventions.

- ★★★★ *Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance*

<http://www.dbsalliance.org/bookstore/brochures.html>

This site offers about a dozen brochures on depression and bipolar disorder. A five-page brochure for teens about depressive illnesses is useful.

- ★★★★ *So You Don't Want to Go to a Psychiatrist!*

<http://www.mentalhealth.com/fr20.html>

Click on Depression in the column on the left, then Stories of Recovery, then to this title. Although it never mentions nonpsychiatrists, this three-pager addresses the anxieties of our clients. It is perhaps best used for the ambivalent patient.

- ★★★★ *People with Depression Tend to Seek Negative Feedback*

<http://www.shpm.com/articles/depress/negfeed.html>

A brief but useful handout because it addresses and teaches this important point about negativity.

- ★★★★ *Understanding and Treating Depression*

<http://www.couns.uiuc.edu/brochures/depression.htm>

A brief, balanced, and complete overview.

- ★★★★ *Have a Heart's Depression Home* <http://www.have-a-heart.com>

Stephen L. Bernhardt, PhD, offers several fine essays: Depression: Understanding Suicidal Thoughts (he covers seven triggers for suicide); Helping a Depressed Friend; Emotional Thought Stopping (an exercise); and others. Very clear and useful for therapy.

- ★★★★ *Steven Thos's Mental Health Resources—Depression and Bipolar Disorder*

<http://www.thewritebrain.org/thow9903.html>

About 40 questions very likely to be asked by patients or families, and annotated links to multiple answers.

- ★★★ *Best and Worst Things to Say to Someone Who Is Depressed*

<http://www.thewellspring.com/Journal/JWT/worstbestdepressed.html>

There are 23 best and 99 worst. These might be useful for frustrated family members to consider.

Medication Treatment

- ★★★★★ *Are You Considering Medication for Depression?*
<http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/booklets/meds/meds.html>

About eight pages in a question-and-answer format on medications. Very relevant questions and good writing make this a useful handout before medication evaluation.

- ★★★★★ *Pharmacological Treatment of Mood Disorders* by David M. Goldstein, MD
http://www.healthyplace.com/communities/bipolar/nimh/bipolar_medications.htm

A rather sophisticated, six-page review of medications.

Against Solely Medication

- ★★★★★ *Psychotherapy versus Medication for Depression: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom with Data* by David O. Antonuccio, PhD, William G. Danton, PhD, and Garland Y. DeNelsky, PhD <http://www.apa.org/journals/anton.html>

“This article reviews a wide range of well-controlled studies comparing psychological and pharmacological treatments for depression. The evidence suggests that the psychological interventions, particularly cognitive-behavioral therapy, are at least as effective as medication in the treatment of depression, even if severe.” Written for the reading level and sophistication of professionals.

- ★★★ *Placebo Effect Accounts for Fifty Percent of Improvement in Depressed Patients Taking Antidepressants* <http://www.apa.org/releases/placebo.html>

Summary written for the public.

Cognitive Therapy

- ★★★★★ *The Cognitive Therapy Pages* by Robert Westermeyer, PhD
<http://www.habitsmart.com/cogtitle.html>

In six sections of two to six pages each, Westermeyer offers complete and accessible explanations. Suitable for introducing almost all patients to cognitive-behavioral therapy.

- ★★★★★ *Cognitive Behavior Therapy*
<http://www.cognitive-behavior-therapy.org>

There are excellent explanations of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) in a format for the average reader, totaling about 25 pages, under What is CBT? Thank you, Dr. Bush.

- ★★★ *Cognitive Therapy: A Multimedia Learning Program* <http://mindstreet.com/>

In a series of 11 brief excerpts (downloadable as QuickTime movies), the basics of cognitive therapy for depression are presented. They are from a commercial CD-ROM, a sophisticated training program in CBT, that could serve as an introduction to treatment for the less-skilled reader or those who like computerized presentations.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

★★★★ *Seasonal Light/SAD*

<http://www.geocities.com/hotsprings/7061/sadhome.html>

This site is about SAD only. It offers many links, bibliographies, organizations, and products. A similar site is *Outside In* at <http://www.outsidein.co.uk/sadinfo.htm>.

NATIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS**Depression and Related Affective Disorders Association**

Johns Hopkins Hospital
600 North Wolfe Street
Baltimore, MD 21287-4647
Phone: 410-955-4647
E-mail: drada@jhmi.edu
<http://www.drada.org>

Emotional Health Anonymous

PO Box 2081
San Gabriel, CA 91778
Phone: 626-287-6260
E-mail: sgveha@hotmail.com
<http://www.flash.net/~sgveha>

Fellowship of people who meet to share experiences, strengths, and hopes to solve common mental health problems.

Emotions Anonymous

PO Box 4245
St. Paul, MN 55104
Phone: 651-647-9712
<http://www.emotionsanonymous.org>

Fellowship for people experiencing emotional difficulties.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill

Colonial Place Three
2107 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 2201
Phone: 703-524-7600 or 800-950-NAMI
(Hotline)
<http://www.nami.org>

See also Bipolar Disorder (Chapter 10) and Suicide (Chapter 33).

National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association

730 North Franklin, Suite 501
Chicago, IL 60610
Phone: 800-826-3632
<http://www.ndmda.org>

Prozac Survivors Support Group

PO Box 1727
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
Phone: 800-392-0640
E-mail: skisun@earthlink.net
<http://www.pssg.org>

Postpartum Support International

927 North Kellogg Avenue
Santa Barbara, CA 93111
Phone: 805-967-7636

To increase awareness of the emotional changes women often experience during pregnancy and after the birth of a baby.

Recovery

802 North Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60610
Phone: 312-337-5661
<http://www.recovery-inc.org>

A community mental health organization that offers a self-help method of will training.