

DEPRESSION

Just the next step

Depression lies. It tells you nothing will change, that you're a burden, that trying is pointless. It's a liar with a megaphone. You don't have to fix everything today — you just have to take the next step. That's it. That's the whole job.

1 THE BARE-MINIMUM DAY (EVERY ONE COUNTS AS A WIN)

On the heavy days, lower the bar until you can step over it:

- > Drink a glass of water
- > Open the curtains. Light matters more than you think
- > Stand outside for 2 minutes — doorstep counts
- > Eat something. Anything. Toast is a meal today
- > Shower OR brush your teeth — one, not both, is fine
- > Send one text back

2 ACTION BEFORE MOTIVATION

Here's the trick depression doesn't want you to know: you will almost never feel like doing the thing first. Motivation follows action, not the other way round. Do the thing tiny and badly — walk to the end of the road, wash one plate, reply to one message. The feeling shows up late, but it shows up.

3 IF TALKING FEELS IMPOSSIBLE, SHOW SOMEONE THIS

Cut this bit out or screenshot it. Hand it to a mate, family member or your GP:

- > "I've been struggling for a while — this isn't a one-off bad day."
- > "I find it hard to talk about, so I'm showing you this instead."
- > "I don't need you to fix it. I need you to know."
- > "Things that might help: checking in on me, sitting with me, coming to an appointment."

4 WHEN IT'S TIME TO CALL IN BACKUP

Get support now — GP, NHS 111 (option 2), or the numbers on the back — if:

- > The low has lasted more than two weeks
- > You're sleeping all day or barely at all
- > You've stopped doing things you used to care about
- > You're using drink or drugs to get through
- > You're having thoughts of harming yourself — that one's a today call, not a someday call

POCKET PHRASE — SAY IT WHEN IT HITS

"You don't need to feel like it to do it."

MAKE IT YOURS

My bare-minimum list (write 3 tiny wins for the heavy days):

GO DEEPER

NHS: DEPRESSION

Symptoms, treatments, and how to get help via your GP — <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/depression-in-adults/>

MIND: DEPRESSION

Real info without the jargon — <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/depression/>

HUB OF HOPE

Postcode search for local mental health support — <https://hubofhope.co.uk>

NHS TALKING THERAPIES

Self-refer for free therapy — no GP needed — <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-NHS-talking-therapies-service>

IF IT'S URGENT, RIGHT NOW:

Samaritans: 116 123 (free, 24/7) • Text SHOUT to 85258

Immediate danger or badly hurt? Call 999 or go straight to A&E.

YOU ARE CAPABLE OF ANYTHING.