

The Aims of Depressed Anonymous

- To let the depressed person know that they are not alone in their struggle with depression.
- To provide a group where members can help one another.
- To learn new skills in taking mastery over our lives.
- To begin to live again with hope and joy.
- To help others learn to do pleasant activities again.
- To help each member feel better about themselves — today, and one day at a time!
- To educate the depressed person and their family about the nature of depression.
- To remove the shame of feeling depressed, by affirming that it's OK to admit that we are feeling overwhelmed.

What do you mean by peer based?

A peer based organization means that we are all equals, we are not acting in the role of mental health professional or doctor. Members of this group either have depression, or have a loved one with depression. If there are mental health professionals in a meeting, they are asked not to act in that role during the meeting. We do not instruct or advise we merely share from our own experience.

How much does it cost to join the group?

There are no dues or fees for membership. It is free to all who need it. We are self supporting from voluntary contributions from our members to cover expenses.

Is there a membership requirement?

All a person needs for membership is a desire to stop saddening themselves.

What about confidentiality?

What you hear in the room must remain confidential. You're asked not to share what another person has spoken about.

Do I have to talk if I attend a meeting?

People do not have to speak if that is their wish. We do suggest however that you participate, even if that participation is merely your first name and that you pass when it is your turn to speak.

Is Depressed Anonymous a class? Does someone teach the class?

Depressed Anonymous is not a class nor does a professional lead the group. We are a peer based support group where each of us brings our own experiences with depression and shares them with the group. We also live our lives based on the 12 Steps, the suggested spiritual principles of Depressed Anonymous.

Can you come to a meeting even if you are not depressed, or if you have a loved one with depression?

Yes, if the meeting is "open", you do not need to self-identify as having depression. The general public is welcome at open meetings if they wish to learn about our solution to depression. Closed meeting are only for those who self-identify with depression.

What position does Depressed Anonymous take with regard to antidepressant medication?

Depressed Anonymous takes no position on medications. Only we know what is best for our own health, with the recommendation of a medical professional.

What position does Depressed Anonymous take with regard to drugs and alcohol?

Depressed Anonymous takes no position on drugs and alcohol. We do recommend however that we not come to a meeting while intoxicated.

What causes depression?

There are many theories as to what causes depression, but Depressed Anonymous takes no official position on the cause of depression. We choose instead to focus on the solution, using a spiritual program to give ourselves a daily reprieve from the symptoms of depression.

What can you talk about at a DA meeting?

The meetings are not meant to be a forum listing and complaining about our symptoms. It is a place where we recognize that we are partially responsible about our thinking and how it affects our depression. The focus here is on finding a solution to depression and not to wallow in it.

How many meetings will it take before I am no longer depressed?

We can't answer that question directly. We believe that even though our good days are now more frequent and our bad days less frequent, we still keep coming back to meetings so as to both help ourselves and to give help to others still suffering. Our program is one that we believe you don't graduate from. Relief from depression is a daily reprieve and is contingent upon:

- Staying connected with the group
- Using the spiritual tools on a daily basis

The 12 Steps of Depressed Anonymous mention God several times. Do I need to believe in the supernatural to participate in DA?

Depressed Anonymous is a spiritual program and it does not require a belief in God. Belief in the supernatural is not required, but belief in a power greater than the individual is required. This Higher Power can take any form, or no form whatever. We refrain from discussing religious topics as they foster divisiveness whereas spiritual topics foster inclusiveness. To start off you can make the fellowship of DA your higher power.

The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the Serenity
To Accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And Wisdom to know the difference.

Modified Version of Serenity Prayer

I place my hand in yours,
Because together We can do
What we could never do alone.
God, grant us the Serenity
To Accept the things we cannot change,
Courage to change the things we can,
And Wisdom to know the difference.
Thy will, not mine be done.

The Twelve Steps of Depressed Anonymous

1. We admitted that we were powerless over depression and that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God to be.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take a personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry it out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to the depressed, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

The contents of this pamphlet are for informational use only. The resources may, or may not, help you. Do not solely rely on the information contained here. Seek help, you are worth it.



What is Depressed Anonymous?

Depressed Anonymous is a peer based support group based on the model pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous.

Information about the fellowship Depressed Anonymous can be found at:

<https://DepressedAnonymous.org>

On that website there are the following:

- Blog with over 1400 posts about various topics relating to depression recovery
- Audio recordings of speakers from DA telling their story of recovery
- List of all the Depressed Anonymous literature available to order. You are under no obligation to purchase these but many find them helpful.
- Lists of meetings, both face to face and online meetings. If there is not a local meeting near you then attend an online meeting.