

# Talking Yourself Out of Depression

January 21 is expected to be the saddest day of 2019



If previous years are an indication, the blues strike the hardest on the third Monday of the new year. Chalk it up to the post-holiday funk, failure to keep New Year's resolutions, or the bleak winter. Or add all three together and you've got a perfect storm for depression.

Over the years, therapists have used a variety of approaches to help people with depression, especially the blues that come this time of year (seasonal affective disorder). Another form of therapy is talking hold: talk therapy.

Talk about it.

I know, I know. Therapy is more than just talking. "Sessions involve working with a professional therapist to learn methods of thinking, speaking and acting that eliminate negative thoughts and replace isolating behaviors with more positive activities to banish the blues." (Smithsonian)

Therapists have hit upon something the Bible has already made known. We were built to live in community. We are wired to live in a relationship with God and with other people. We interact. We support. We encourage. We talk.

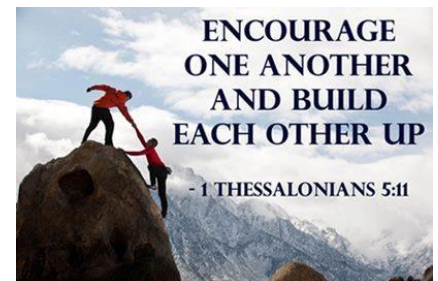
Two friends have told me how long periods of isolation bring on depression. The sadder they get, the less they want to be around people. One friend expressed it as a cycle that feeds on itself.

Simply being around people is not the answer. Try that at the mall sometime. It doesn't work. Ever visited a strange church full of people yet felt alone? The presence of bodies is not the key: supportive interaction is.

That's the kind of community in which we were created to live—and it's the kind of community the church is called to be.

- "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love" (Rom. 12:10).
- "Honor one another above yourselves" (Rom. 12:10).
- "Live in harmony with one another" (Rom. 12:16).
- "Have equal concern for each other" (I Cor. 12:25).
- "Serve one another in love" (Gal. 5:13).
- "Carry each other's burdens" (Gal. 6:2).
- "Be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Eph. 4:2).
- "Be kind and compassionate to one another" (Eph. 4:32).
- "Build each other up" (I Thess. 5:11).
- "Encourage one another daily" (Heb. 3:13).

Some form of "one another" appears 59 times in the New Testament, so supporting and helping each other is kind of a big deal.



If depression is a recurring visitor to your house, I am *not* dismissing the value of counseling. But I am encouraging you to get involved with a community of believers. Don't just "go to church." Get involved. Participate in a small group Bible study. Talk about life and problems in a Christian community. Pray for each other.

*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God" (1 Cor. 1:3-4).*

God gave us each other, so let's help each other.

Wanna talk?

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